MAXIMUM ROCKN ROLL

#269 $4

OCTOBER 2005

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MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

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DEADLINES FOR NEXT ISSUE:
Scene Reports: continuously, with photos!
Interviews: continuously, with photos!
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(use this mainly for comments & letters. Use phone for ads & other business stuff)

TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR crew's current Top 10 (or so) lists of stuff we've reviewed this month.

TIM BROOKS

- BOXED IN-Distance-EP
- GOVERNMENT WARNING-No Way Out-EP
- RATTUS-The Poko Recordings-2XLP
- FINAL SOLUTIONS-My Love Is Disappointing-EP
- THE REAL LOSERS/THE ILLEGAL MOVERS-EP
- FORMER CELLMATES-CD
- OUT COLD-Planned Accidents-EP
- UV RAYS-Rad Reputation-EP
- HOSTILE TAKEOVER-EP
- HELLSHOCK-EP / JUSTICE-LP

MITCH CARDWELL

- INTELLIGENCE-Icky Baby-LP
- MISS ALEX WHITE & THE RED ORCHESTRA-LP
- THE SULTANAS-You're the One/Move On Now-45
- FINAL SOLUTIONS-EP
- SWELL MAPS-2xLP
- DEAN DIRG-The Chimpanzee-EP
- V/A-The Ikon Records Story-LP
- BBQ-Take A Message-EP
- THE EVOLUTIONS/THE FATALS-Pathetic Split-EP
- TEENGENERATE-live

ROB COONS

- STRUNG UP-Warfucked-EP
- SCURVY DOGS-Relieve Yourself-EP
- MEANWHILE-Ghostface Democracy-EP
- LACK OF INTEREST-LP
- BOXED IN-Distance-EP
- DEAN DIRG-The Chimpanzee-EP
- RATTUS-The Poko Recordings-2XLP
- RUIN/PAUSE-split EP
- 013-Takaisin Todellisuuteen-LP
- HOSTILE TAKEOVER-Fucking Up-EP

PAUL CURRAN

OUT DISCOVERING AMERICA

JONATHAN FLOYD

- TOKYO EYE-Vindictive-EP
- DEAN DIRG-The Chimpanzee-EP
- BBQ-Take A Message-EP
- INTELLIGENCE-Icky Baby-LP
- ZOOMEN-10"
- OUT COLD-Planned Accidents-EP
- ALTAIRA/BLOTTO-split EP
- PONYS-Another Wound/Good Good Things-45
- STRUNG UP-Warfucked-EP
- ARGIES-Al Limite De Las Utopias-CD

JEFF HEERMANN

- INTELLECTUALS-CD
- KILLER'S KISS-CD
- MANIKIN-Still CD
- SWELL MAPS-2xLP
- HIPS-JAMES BROWN EP
- MISS ALEX WHITE & THE RED ORCHESTRA-LP
- BBQ - TAKE A MESSAGE EP
- EVOLUTIONS / FATALS - SPLIT EP
- ICKY BOYFRIENDS-A Love Obscene-2xCD
- INTELLIGENCE-Icky Baby LP

KENNY KAOS

- THE FOUR SLICKS-Bye Bye-EP
- THE MANIKINS-Highschool Goodboy-10"
- ZODIAC KILLERS-Radiation Beach-LP
- HEARTBURNS/FRANKIE THE DAMAGE-split EP
- THE SULTANAS-45
- DEAN DIRG-The Chimpanzee-EP
- THE REAL LOSERS/THE ILLEGAL MOVERS-EP
- APE CITY R&B-45
- ZOOMEN-10"
- THE STIMULATORS-Loud Fast Rules-EP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- MISS ALEX WHITE & THE RED ORCHESTRA-LP
- THE EVOLUTIONS/THE FATALS-EP
- HIPS-James Brown-EP
- ICKY BOYFRIENDS-2Xcd
- DEAN DIRG-The Chimpanzee-EP
- SCURVY DOGS-EP
- FINAL SOLUTIONS-EP / INTELLIGENCE-LP
- THE SULTANAS-45
- THE REAL LOSERS/THE ILLEGAL MOVERS-EP
- APE CITY R&B-45 / KILLER'S KISS-CD

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL

TOP 10

Please send us records (2 copies of vinyl, if possible– one for MRR and one for reviewer), or CD-only releases. See reviews section for where to send tapes & CD-Rs.

WILL WEBER KNEITEL

OUT COLD-Planned Accidents-EP	FINAL SOLUTIONS-EP
SCREACHING WEASEL-Kill the Musicians-CD	THE STIMULATORS-Loud Fast Rules-EP
ICKY BOYFRIENDS-A Love Obscene-2Xcd	LION OF JUDAH-Soul Power-EP
SWELL MAPS-2xLP	STRUNG UP-Warfucked-EP
JUSTICE-Elephant Skin-LP	LACK OF INTEREST-LP

RAY LUJAN

LEMURIA-EP / STOLEN BIKE CRUSADE-CD	LOSERS BEAT WINNERS-CD
MISS ALEX WHITE & THE RED ORCHESTRA-LP	HEARTBURNS/FRANKIE THE DAMAGE-split EP
NEW BLACK-CD / THE NOW-CD	THE REAL LOSERS/THE ILLEGAL MOVERS-EP
THE FIRE STILL BURNS-Good As New-EP	V/A-Take Penacilin Now-CD
THE BOMB-CD / HANS-A-PLAST-LP	MINUTEMEN-Film / LOOK BACK AND LAUGH-live

ALLAN MCNAUGHTON

TOKYO EYE-Vindictive-EP	BALLAST-LP / HOSTILE TAKEOVER-EP
INTELLIGENCE-LP / BOXED IN-EP	DUE TOMORROW/TRASH TRAIN-split LP
LÜTTEN-Delete I Elite-LP	FRIENDLY-Dreamers-EP
DEAN DIRG-EP / STRUNG UP-EP	SEEIN' RED/BURY THE LIVING/KRIEGSTANZ live
HANS-A-PLAST-LP / RUIN/PAUSE-split EP	LEMURIA-EP

GOLNAR NIKPOUR

BOXED IN-Distance-EP	DEAN DIRG-The Chimpanzee-EP
GOVERNMENT WARNING-No Way Out-EP	RUIN/PAUSE-split EP
RATTUS-The Poko Recordings-2XLP	FRIENDLY-Dreamers-EP
MEANWHILE-Ghostface Democracy-EP	OUT COLD-Planned Accidents-EP
FINAL SOLUTIONS-My Love Is Disappointing-EP	AUTISTIC YOUTH-Banned from Roseland-EP

DONNA POOLE

TOKYO EYE-Vindictive-EP	HEARTBURNS/FRANKIE THE DAMAGE-split EP
OUT COLD-Planned Accidents-EP	FINAL SOLUTIONS-EP
AUTISTIC YOUTH-Banned from Roseland-EP	THE MANIKINS-Highschool Goodboy-10"
GOVERNMENT WARNING-No Way Out-EP	ZODIAC KILLERS-Radiation Beach-LP
FRIENDLY-Dreamers-EP	SWELL MAPS-2xLP

BRUCE ROEHRS

STRUNG UP-Warfucked-EP	MEANWHILE-Ghostface Democracy-EP
LUTÈCE BORGIÁ/THE JANITORS-split EP	HEARTBURNS/FRANKIE THE DAMAGE-split EP
PÖBEL GESOCKS-Punk-7"	REAZIONE-L'Altra Faccia Della Riviera-10"
SCURVY DOGS-Relieve Yourself-EP	AUTISTIC YOUTH-EP / OUT COLD-EP
RUIN/PAUSE-split EP / HELLSHOCK-EP	HOSTILE TAKEOVER-EP

RYAN WELLS

SWELL MAPS-2xLP	THE REAL LOSERS/THE ILLEGAL MOVERS-EP
ICKY BOYFRIENDS-A Love Obscene-2xCD	THE EVOLUTIONS/THE FATALS-EP
ZODIAC KILLERS-Radiation Beach-LP	HIPS-James Brown-EP
INTELLIGENCE-Icky Baby-LP	APE CITY R&B-45
BBQ-Take A Message-EP	THE SULTANAS-45

ZINE TOP TEN

Zine Libs	Profane Existence #49
Rolling Thunder #1	Strap Yourself In #8
Blurt #3	City Trash #21 & 22
Illusion Fields	Tokidoki #1
L.A. Scene Reporter #15	Super Jetboys Flyer Collection

MRR SHITWORKERS

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#150/Nov '95. NY Loose, Snap-Her, Sick Boys, Splatterheads, Pipe, Pregnant Man, Final Conflict, Rawness, Stink, Goblins, Smellie Fingers.

#151/Dec '95. Lowdowns, My White Bread Mom, Queen B's, Electric Frankenstein, Turtlehead, Serpico, Trick Babys, In/Humanity, Stains, Varukers, Pist, Terrible Virtue.

#153/Feb '96. Snort, Hatchetface, Little Ugly Girls, ADZ, Oxymoron, NOTA, Stun Guns, Surfin' Turnips, Gutfiddle, Karen Monster, Dimestore Haloes.

#154/Mar '96. Motards, Subincision, Stisism, Donnas, Stallions, Count Backwards.

#156 pt 1/May '96. Public Toys, Crunch, Peter & The Test Tube Babies, Nails Of Hawaiian, Splash 4, Yawp!, Lifetime, Sickoids.

#156 pt 2/May '96. Australian Special: Beanflipper, Melancholy, Blitz Babiez, Crank, SubRosa, Mindsnare, TMT, H-Block, B-Sides, Fallout, Frenzal Rhomb, Lawnsmell, One Inch Punch, Chickenshit, No Deal.

#160/Sept '96. Automatics, Boycot, Toast, Morning Shakes, Mormons, John Q. Public, Sex Offenders, Ballgagger, Business, Apocalypse Babys, Good Riddance.

#161/Oct '96. Jet Bumpers, Steel Miners, Divisia, Lopo Drido, Red #9, Nothing Cool, Sink, Sires, Newtown Grunts.

#162/Nov '96. Phantom Surfers, Candy Snatchers, the Stain, National Guard, Torches To Rome, Restos Fosiles, Two Bo's Maniacs, Snuka, Redemtion 87, Torture Kitty.

#163/Dec '96. Last Sons of Krypton, Prostitutes, Wig Hat, Boys, Let It Rock, Enemy Soil, Vulcaneers, Half Empty, Zeros, Deadcats, Teen Idles.

#166/Mar '97. Walking Abortions, Hickey, '77 Spreads, Sanity Assassins, Cards In Spokes, Joey Tampon & The Toxic Shocks, Adjective Noun, Suicide King, Lenguas Armadas, Trauma, De Crew.

#172/Sept '97. Withdrawals, Judgement, No Motiv, Oppressed Logic, Truents, Left For Dead, Yellowskin, Weird Lovemakers, Smash Your Face, Flatus, Straight Faced, Klaxon, X-It.

#174/Nov '97. Stratford Mercenaries, Lickity Split, Bladder, Piss Shivers, Barnhills, In/Humanity, Education theme issue.

#175/Dec '97. One Man Army, Those Unknown, Boiling Man, Piao Chong, Exploding Crustaceans, Last Year's Youth, Heartdrops, Dirty Burds, Dimestore Haloes.

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Úmlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#185/Oct '98. Traitors, Wimpy Dicks, Armed & Hammered, Dylan McKays, NME, Tezacrifco, Worm, Roswells, Raxola, Beatnik Termites.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, Third Party, No Class, Skabs.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#193/June '99. Munster Recs, DS-13, Safety Pins, Pussycats, Piolines, False Alarm, Darlington, Bad Stain, Bodies, Houseboy, Mullets.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres..

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#198/Nov '99. Hail Mary, Pressure Point, Bump 'N Uglies, The Victims, A//Political, Outlast

#199/Dec '99. Locust, Ratos de Porao, USV, Razlog Za, G-3, Swarm, WHN?, Mt. St. Helens, Black Cat Music, Enemy Soil.

#200/Jan '00. American Steel, Curse, Gee Vaucher, Hers Never Existed, Aaron Cometbus, Active distro, Toxic Narcotic, MRR catalogue #100-200.

#201/Feb '00. Beerzone, Towards An End, Daybreak, "Best Punk Singles of the '90s," the WTO riots in Seattle.

#202/March '00. KTMWQ, Real Estate Fraud, Strike Out, Broken Rekids, the Haggard, GC5, Gore Gore Girls, the Catheters.

#203/April '00. Spazz, Slang, *Slug & Lettuce* zine, *Suburban Voice* zine, As We Once Were, Red Angel Dragnet, Four Letter Words, Slampt Records, the Wednesdays, the Fuses.

#204/May '00. Cocksparrer, Talk Is Poison, Red Scare, Put Downs, Out Cold, Geraldine, Michael Knight, CBGaV, Pillage People.

#205/June '00. Punks With Kids special. Skudz, 50 Million, Legion, Wilbur Cobb, Coalition.

#206/July '00. Drunk, ESL, Ambition Mission, Lord High Fixers, Cripple Bastards, Dig Dug, Federation X, Amulet, Valentine Killers.

#207/Aug '00. Harum Scarum, Raw Power, Unseen, Pekinska Patka, Hudson Falcons, Dementia 13, Confine, Allergic to Whores.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#210/Nov '00. J Church, Profane Existence, Pezz, Pre-Teens, Templars, This Machine Kills, Subtonix, OB.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#216/May '01. Propagandhi, Angelic Upstarts, Discordance Axis, Ruination, Photographer: Chris Boarts, Strap-Ons, Lynnards Innards

#217/June '01. Joey Ramone R.I.P., Tear It Up, Skitsystem, The Pattern, CrimethInc., Esperanza, The Chicago Blackout, Photographer: Ace

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#219/Aug '01. "Fix It!" cycling article, Crucial Unit, Lost Sounds, Lombardies, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 1, Casualties, Resinators, *P.U.N.K.*, Slaughter & the Dogs, Anti-Flag, Dontcares, S'Bitch.

#220/Sep '01. Latin American Issue. Aubuso Sonoro, Anti-Todo, Fuerza X, Apatia No, Manganzoids, Demencia, Sick Terror, Tocatta y Bulla, NTN, Argies, Reconcile, Anti-Korpus, Ruido De Odio, Los Pepiniyos, Rebelion Disidente, Brazil Scum , Kim Bae Photo Essay.

#221/Oct '01. Tales from the G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin pt. 2, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene report, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality,"

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#224/Jan '02. "Legislation Since Sept. 11," Rendencion 9.11, Metro Youth, Severed Head of State, Piranhas, Paraf, Backstabbers, Inc, An Albatross, Citizen Fish Tour, SPAM Records, the Virus, Action Time.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#226/Mar '02. Queer punk special issue. Vaseline, Quails, Skinjobs, Italian queer punk report, Vaginal Davis, Feelings on a Grid, Sissies, Scott Free, Dumba, Columns.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#232/Sept '02. "No Future" article, Lost, Fartz, Sell Outs, Razors Edge, Stakeout, Dillinger Four, All or Nothing HC, Fleshies, Bridge Nine Records, Akashic Books, Liberty.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Anti-war guest columns. Anti-war scene reports. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution," Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#237/Feb '03. Top Ten Records of 2002, "Music as a Weapon: Artists in Wartime," Dirt Bike Annie, Let It Burn, Stockyard Stoics, King Khan & Shrines, 625 Records, Feast Or Famine, Rudimentary Peni, Coachwhips, Self Defense.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola and San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine, Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#252/May '04. Fucked Up, Firestarter, Inepsy, Laukaus, Great Clearing Off, Radio Reelers, Extreme Noise Records, 46 Short, The State, John The Baker, Free Verse, Chrystaei Branchaw photos.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, Portland, Boston, Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. The Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, The Boss Martians, Reactionary Three, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, The Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, "Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scene report

263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction, Czech scene report, New Zealand scene report.

268/September '05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

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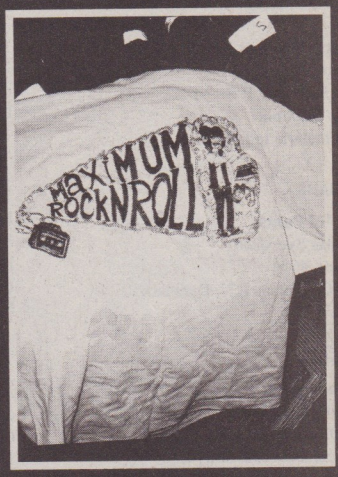

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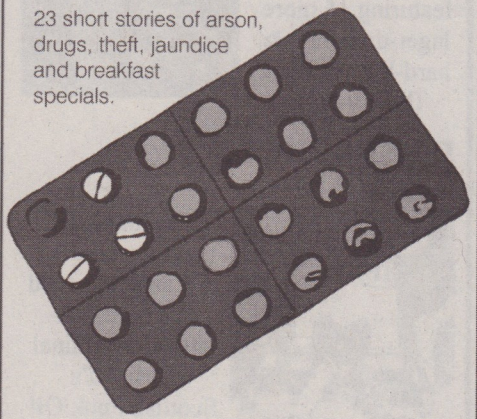

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MRR—

My name is David Hale and I'm from Huntsville, Alabama. I submitted a release of a band called Evil Weasel (from Tel-Aviv, Israel) that my record label put out in the states. I would like to thank you for giving it an honest review and not focusing on the where the record came from. I would also like to thank you for opening up a whole new world of music to kids like me from small/mid-sized towns the world over. Without *MRR*, I'd never have gotten into The Onion Flavored Rings, DS-13, RAMBO, Career Suicide, Fucked Up, None More Black, No Hope for the Kids, Rai Ko Ris and all of the other great bands y'all covered. Sure, I'd like The Catholic Boys, Annihilation Time, The Soviettes, The Body Electric, Kakistocracy, and To What End? as far as bands that have come to Huntsville are concerned, but I don't think I'd know too much about DIY culture or have the courage to start my own record label, even if it gets bad reviews, if I didn't know that there were kids like me doing this all around the world—even in places like Southeast Asia! I've wanted to do a scene report for Huntsville, Alabama for the longest time, but we've never had too many long running good punk bands. So in this letter I'll give y'all an idea of what's going on in the Rocket City ad why it'd be so great for anyone to come here on tour. So as far as bands go, a lot of kids in Huntsville are fans of Alabama Jihad, who used to be called The Panic Buttons (they have a record out in Sweden by a guy named Ken Rock or something, I've been meaning to buy it for a long time because it's amazing!) and they're now called Magazine Love. The style is kind of hard to describe. It's very synth-driven which is really popular in this area due to ex-locals Curbside Service (now making the big emo bucks as The Snake The Cross The Crown). There are also other types of bands here too ranging from great American Roots music like the Pine Hill Haints and intense grindcore like Death Camp Experiment (featuring members of Random Conflict) and there is a really good surf rock band called Daikaiju (featuring ex-Peeps members and Random Conflict members). We have an amazing venue called the Flying Monkey Arts Center. Here's a few bands that have played there that have been talked about in *MRR*: Annihilation Time, The Soviettes, To What End?, The Catholic Boys (they played at FMAC way back in like 2003 or 2002 when it was first starting out but haven't been back in awhile), Holy Shit, and the Evens (featuring Ian MacKaye). The Flying Monkey is really popular around town now so getting a show there would take more than a month's notice but it would be worth it! I heard a rumor that To What End? said that they liked playing Huntsville more than they like playing Chicagofest! Sorry about the lame commercial about my city, but I hope that eventually more people will come here on tour. I'm starting up a new band and my record label is starting to get more serious and we'd love to help any bands on tour that want to play in Huntsville or that need a good place to stop instead of going to Atlanta, Chattanooga, Nashville, or Birmingham (nothing against those cities they're all great places to go...except Birmingham)! We'd love to host y'all here and we're already talking to a few bands about coming here. If anyone wants to get in touch with me and trade records (I'm hopefully starting a box distro for shows so free stuff would be really cool!) or find out about coming to Huntsville on their next tour or something, my address is:

—David Hale
1504 Olive Drive
Huntsville, AL 35801 USA
thenrasucksreallybad@hotmail.com.

MRR and the international punk community—

I'm just a punk kid from New Jersey (also involved in the New York state punk/HC scene) and I'm currently trying to learn about punk scenes across Europe and Scandinavia. For a while I've been very interested in looking at punk (as a punk) in a non-academic way (not like some stupid anthropology study about punk for the Ivory tower of Academia) but with a focus on the philosophy, community, and identity of punk.

I'm writing about punk from a personal perspective through interviews, scene reports, opinion pieces, music, art, and experiences with punks, non-punks, and scenes/communities. I'm interested in what punk is, a reflection on punk as a movement and as a personal experience. This all comes from the very central and important role punk has played in my life. *But I really need your help*! I'm trying to learn about punk scenes in Europe and Scandinavia and to make some contacts that can help me with travel and experience abroad. This means punks, bands, labels, clubs, and especially DIY communities, squats, free spaces, and collectives, along with just general scene reports so I know where to look. I also need help with places to eat, sleep, live, and work. I may have the opportunity to travel through Scandinavia and Europe so I desperately need your help!

I'm relying on the kindness of the international punk community for any help. I'm really trying to make this project a reality because it's something deeply personal for me and something that I'm incredibly passionate about. I feel I can add another voice for *our* scene and I need all the help I can get! Thanks to anyone who can help, "I've always depended on the kindness of strangers."

Contact me at,
—Noah ES
19 Hearthstone Terrace
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noah@eber-schmid.net

MRR—

I need your help—the punk house that I live at is old. Shit, I'm *barely* older than it. And I'm trying to get a zine together about the house. An informal/oral history kinda deal. So I was wondering if you would be so kind as to print this in your fine publication in hopes that someone somewhere can tell me about how he/she once fucked in my bathroom while a crappy band from Florida played in the basement...*The Lost Cross Punk House Needs Your Help!*

So, it's hard to believe, but it has been 20 years since this fucking hellhole starting ruining peoples lives and destroying morality across southern Illinois. And what I would like to do is help put together a zine of sorts about it.

What I'm hoping to get from people (i.e. *you*) is something about your history/relationship with Lost Cross. What it has done for you, to you. How you've seen it change for the better, for the worse. Maybe just an anecdote or two. I know most people out there don't live in the area, and have only passed through a couple times, but it would be just a beneficial to get an outsiders perspective of the house as well. After all, the bands and people passing through help make it what it is.

I'm not trying to put together some sort of definitive history of the house. That would be

pointless, since I could just go down the street and ask local Demi-God Malcolm. I'm just trying to get something together for everyone who still cares about Lost Cross, and wants to know how everyone else felt/feels about it too. People come in and out of scenes all the time, and I think it would be great to hear what it was like to hang out and play at The Cross throughout the years.

If you could throw your name and age and around when you hung out at Lost Cross (or first visited), that would be helpful to—just so I can credit people correctly.

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or email it to - stayinchicago@hotmail.com

Maxi Rocker—

So how did you get a name like Karl Bakla you ask? That's a good question that has a somewhat humorous answer. Sometime in the mid 90s I was working at this restaurant that I fucking hated called the Iron Horse Café. Sure there were some benefits about working there, like working with Fin my bandmate/room mate. Fin & I had a band together called Walt that played semi poppy punk, but we had a problem there was a band called Walt Mink that played indie rock & we didn't want to share a name with them because they were pussies, so Walt was out. One of my co-workers at the time was a short Filipino fuck named Leo who always came to work with a hangover. Whenever Leo would see me he would say in his thick Filipino accent, "You bakla, you hoto!" At first I had no idea what this fuck he was talking about but I quickly learned from co-workers that "hoto" is Spanish, & "bakla" is Pilipino & in each of their languages means the derogatory term for homosexual, you know, like fag! Not being a homophobic type I didn't really care if he thought I was gay or not, I thought it was kind of funny. Even though it never pissed my off that he would call me "bakla" or "hoto" after about the millionth time the joke was getting old. I wish he had something new to call me like "Elephant Marching Parade" or "Benny from LA Law," but unimaginative Leo had to stick with "Karl you bakla!" After the billionth time of being called a "Bakla" I decided to joke back with Leo, so I started to "bak" at him like a chicken, I said to him "Leo I'm not Bakla, you're the one that is bak, bak, bak, bakla!" Holy shit! That probably was the quickest way I ever turned the crazy switch on someone because the next thing I know Leo is swinging a huge food server tray at me. Being a great skateboarder I used my mad skills to avoid being hit by the tray. Even though I was attacked I didn't think Leo was being serious because if he was, that meant he was acting like Corky from the TV program *Life Goes On* & wanted to die. Fin told me "I think you pissed him off dude!" I told Fin that I'd smooth things out with the dick head. After a few minutes I went up to him & told him I didn't mean to make him mad but every time I see him he calls me a "bakla" & that I was only joking back with him. At this moment he lunged at me & tried to punch me, but I was to swift yet again & dodged the punch. I think after Leo tried to punch me he knew he fucked up because he had a look like he was scared he was gonna get beat up. Keep in mind I was at least ten years younger than him, outweighed him, & was at least a foot taller than this pathetic fuck. I pointed to Leo and informed him I was not afraid to lose a job I hated, but that I would have to fuck him up twice as much if I had to choose fucking him up & losing my job. When I see Fin a minute or so later he is fucking rolling with laughter & tells me "good job Karl Bakla." I tell him that's not my name, Fin then tells me "Yes it is". The next day at work Leo comes up to me & apologizes, he tells me that he was exhausted the previous day & is going through a bunch of shit at home. I tell him he almost got fucked up & that I didn't give a fuck about his home life, which I didn't, die fucking die! At the next Walt band practice I'm greeted with "What's up Karl Bakla," & we decided to change the name of the band to "Bakla." So there it is. Sure it's no Danny Hatefuck or Kevin Seconds but I like it! I still get happy when I see our old stickers stuck to sign posts but as the days go by I see it less than less, but that's OK though it leaves room for stickers of whatever bands we're playing in now!

So I guess people don't write letters to *MRR* any more because there is nothing in this world they care about. From the time I was a little kid the letter section was my favorite part. I always felt that was the part of the zine where you could read what other punks were thinking. A great story about punks not caring on a recent trip to a "pseudo" Dead Kennedy's gig Bethany decided to pass out some flyers about the corrupted mayor in North Las Vegas. Bethany & I live in Las Vegas not North Las Vegas but we still care about the dickhead they have in office. Bethany wasn't even being pushy she asked people nicely if they'd want a flyer with info on the upcoming election in North Town. The reaction of punks surprised me they were mostly just rude, most grabbed the flyer, & threw it on the ground in front of her, some said they don't give a fuck about politics, others said they didn't vote, & a couple said they were Republicans. Not one person even seemed to care. In the car Bethany told me she was upset & thought at least one person would care. In the car we joked about people who aren't into politics but listen to a band like the Dead Kennedy's. As we drove down Las Vegas Blvd we listened to Kinky Sex Makes The World Go Round & discussed how chilling listening to this song is with the current state of the world. I felt bad I knew that Bethany lost a little respect for this social club we call punk & that true outlaws like us shouldn't have to be surrounded by republican punks, fuck that noize bring on the rebel rock! Enough said about this subject. In a recent MRR I read someone complaining about punk girls posing for porno, what's the fucking issue here? As perverted as I am I'm not much for porno, but who cares? Are guns being held to these hoochie mamma's heads? Do we all do stuff we may or may not regret when we're all young? Hell yes! Whatever asshole brought this subject up thanks for making punk even more pussy than the Green Day: Behind The Music (VH1—*how punk*) where they declare that releasing the track "Good Riddance" was the most punk thing they ever did. Speaking of Green Day my band was doing a cover of the Fang classic "Skinheads Smoke Dope" & were accused of doing a Green Day song, fuck that!

I got to go—it's not as easy as you think to be the next crazy guy in punk rock you love to hate.

Angry Pirates Rock,
—Karl Bakla
Lasvegashardcore@aol.com

PS: I was right to bring up Hickey last time. Fuck! How the fuck could you not love the song "Every Thing I know About Sex I Learned From Kiss?" The Horde kicks ass as well. We got a gig with Kontrol coming up, hell yeah! The Secretions & Ashtray kicked butt at the Double Down Saloon, there ain't no punk in this house!

PPS: Even though I'm a dad I hate most punk parents, most of them are losers & should die. Don't bring your stupid kids to a punk show, your bastard child is a buzzkill leave the "it" with its grandparents or in a hot car!

MRR—

I'm writing to tell you about our project, *Skateboarding Ruined My Life*, a non-commercial mix of punk \ hardcore \ thrash-n-roll bands. Not only legends but also brand new bands from different places of our fucking planet take part in the compilation. Participants include: WxHxNx?, Reproach, Hero Dishonest, xENVISIONx, Hit Me Back, Bones Brigade, Code 13, Pull Out An Eye, GxBx, ETA, etc. The whole list contains 25 bands. But even now we are looking for people to take part in our project. So, if skateboarding means something connected with punk rock to you, if it is more than just sport, then you can send us your recordings and we will find a place for your band with pleasure. We also are looking for people who can provide informational support of our project

—Andrey
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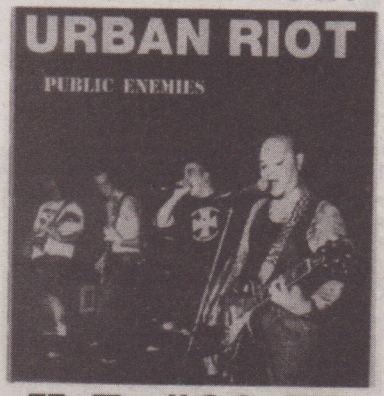

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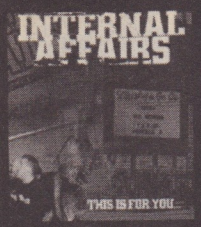

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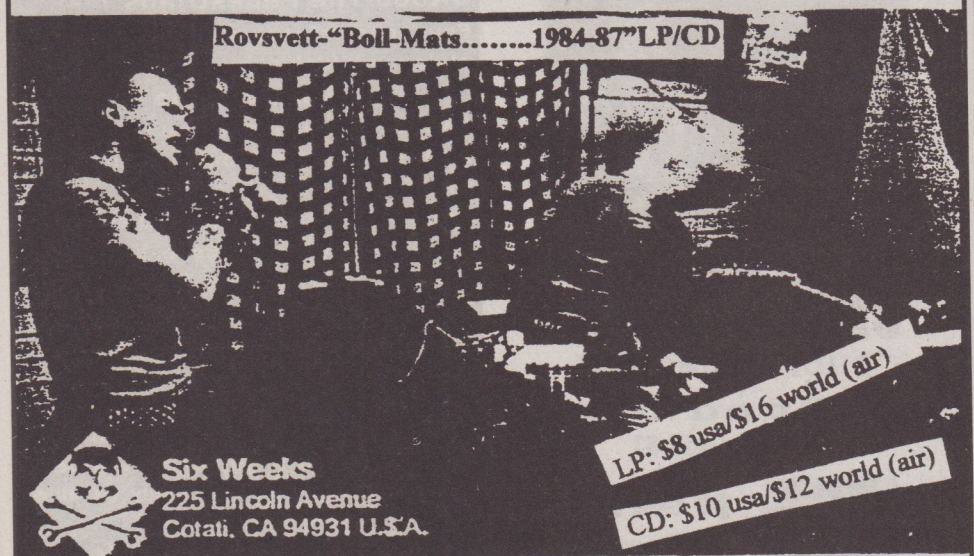

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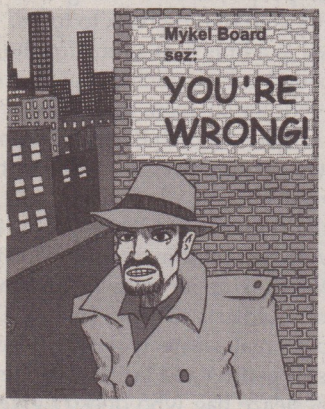

Those who desire to give up freedom in order to gain security, will not have, nor do they deserve, either one.

—Benjamin Franklin

"The big blond guys with muscles out to here and beer cans in their hands are Polish," says Esneider. "The little dark guys not drinking are Latinos."

"Poles and Latinos?" I ask him. "What does that mean? A bunch of idiots who'll steal your car?"

Esneider laughs. Together we go into the punk house. A strange falling-apart affair in the midst of other houses whose residents are returning from someplace, wearing yarmulkes.

It's a benefit for the IWW. A house party, given by a Pole who speaks Spanish. It's typically anarchist, with a lot of drunks and Che Guevara T-shirts.

The bands are gonna play in the basement. In back is the beer, a couple hammocks, a pit bull, some girls with colored hair, some big blond guys with muscles out to here, and some little dark guys.

As it turns out, I won't be able to stay for Esneider's Huasipungo—the reason I came. They're scheduled to play last. I've got a rental car that has to be back by midnight or I get charged an extra day.

I can watch the Polish bands, and their hard-moshing fans. One of whom—an attractive girl with blue hair—smashes me in the mouth with her swinging arms. Score one for the fat lip. That ought to get me laid. Yeah, right.

The high point of the night, however, is when one of the drummers plays the snare with his forehead. Every two or three minutes, he bangs his head into the drum between beats. Amazing, just like Jimi Hendrix.

Then someone tells me he's not playing, but passing out from beer and vodka. Each time he passes out, his head slams into the drum, waking him up. He plays a few seconds, then passes out again.

As the Poles go wild in the basement, upstairs, the non-drinking Latinos are trying to scrounge up something vegetarian. One of them invents the pickle-dog—a dill pickle on a hotdog bun.

"Mmmm yummy," he says, offering me a bite.

I decline.

"I can't believe they let the Poles play first," says Esneider. "They're so drunk they destroy the equipment. Then when it's our sober turn to play, we have nothing left to play on."

Despite the problems, everyone's really friendly. Everyone, that is, except one guy who, from time-to-time glances over his shoulder at me. An attractive young man, with a goatee that must've taken him six months to grow, he scowls whenever we make eye contact.

I don't remember meeting the guy. So I've got no idea what's up with him. Did a condom break, or what?

WE INTERRUPT THIS COLUMN TO BRING YOU TWO NEWS FLASHES:

FLASH ONE: British plain-clothes cops shoot and kill a Brazilian tourist because he runs when they chase him.

FLASH TWO: New York police stop a tour bus in Times Square, handcuffing British tourists and making them kneel in the street before leading them away. They're released an hour later.

RANT: The goal of terrorism is to so scare the locals that they'll jump at anyone. They'll easily give up freedom in the name of security. The goal is to make us change the way we live. To really rack up the *terror*. They've now achieved that goal.

Here in NY, cops at subway entrances "randomly" stop people with backpacks—or any bags at all. They open and sift through the stuff to make sure it won't blow up when they open and sift through the stuff. Can you say *duh?*

The tension in the air is so thick you can cut it with a knife. Of course, they'd shoot you before you got that knife halfway out of your bag.

So, the terrorists won... at least they beat New York and London. But I'm not waving the white flag. I've thought of a way to fight back. I want to use the surrealist answer to all questions, especially those involving the politics of freedom: FISH.

It's probably illegal to advocate it. They could charge me with conspiracy to commit fish, or violation of the fish-terror act. PETA would complain about the horrors of an icthial holocaust.

So I won't advocate anything. It's just a fantasy. Conjecture. Mind play. I would never say *do* any of this fishy stuff. I'll just imagine it in print, okay?

Ahmad carries his big black backpack onto the subway. The random-stoppers in front of the gates approach him.

"Excuse me sir," says one of the huge Negroes manning the search station. "You have been randomly selected to be searched before entry into the subway. You have the right to refuse the search. If you do, however, you will not be allowed into the subway."

Ahmad shrugs under the heavy weight of the backpack. He slips it off and plops it down on the table. Officers open the top flap to find a large sealed plastic bag inside.

"We have to open this bag," says the big Negro.

Ahmad shrugs again.

The guard slips a latexted glove under the tape holding the plastic shut. Suddenly the station fills with an over-powering odor. A sick odor. The odor of dead fish. It invades every space, covering the passengers, the guards, the security, like Nickelodeon slime.

"It's fish!" says the Negro.

"No shit," says an older black woman, standing just inside the gate, watching the proceedings.

"It's smelly old fish," says the Negro, expanding on his earlier statement.

"Maybe it's camouflage," says the other searcher, a white guy with a crew cut and

salt-and-pepper mustache. "Dig deeper."

Fighting back nausea, the big black guy pulls the first fish out of the bag. It's a slimy grey thing, with eyes as clear as a Seattle sky. Then another dead fish. And another. Each adds to the overpowering stench.

Through the gate comes the sound of a woman retching.

"It's all fish, just fish," says the colored guy after he's dug deep enough to see the bottom. "It's just fish."

Ahmad fights back a smile, shrugs his shoulders as the guard packs the fish back into the knapsack.

But Ahmad's only the first stage of the attack. Throughout the city, people are attacking the freedom-takers with fish. Bags of fish left in suitcases in Times Square. Fish in cartons at the airport. Fish in briefcases passing security checks at skyscrapers.

Subway ridership is down. People walk—or take their cars—just to avoid the odor of fish. Tourism is down. Even people white enough to avoid being arrested on a tour bus can't take the fetor of fish. Hotel lobbies smell like a thousand yeast infections.

The city council passes a resolution. It's illegal to carry more than one fish—and that fish must be in a clear plastic bag. Scores of Chinese housewives are arrested the next day, returning from the market. Still people continue to defy the rules, carrying fish.

Newspapers report security guards quitting. Walking off the job. "I'm sick of it," *The Post* reports one guard saying. "You can't pay me enough to handle that s**t." [*The Post* will not write the word *shit*.]

A thought hits someone who it should hit. If you can't carry fish, there's always s**t. Ah, take a deep breath now.

What if we could fight fear with fish, or shit? Like the Yugoslavs who defied Clinton's bombs by going into the street with targets taped to their shirts, what if we could use a serious spirit of play to defeat the fearmongers?

The terrorists have won the battle by making the government try to force us to live in fear and intimidation. Can't we win the war with the spirit of play? Can there be fear or terror if people keep playing?

Remember, I'm not advocating any of this. I advise you not to do it. But if you do, I won't complain very loudly.

NOW BACK TO OUR REGULARLY SCHEDULED COLUMNING.

I had originally planned to write about other things. But the punk show and the bombing pushed those to the back of the bus. I'll try to pack 'em in here. Hold on, though, I'm gonna move fast.

And the lumpen, ignorant, uneducated, dirty, will slowly come to consciousness. They'll discover who are the oppressors and who are the oppressed. They'll find who are their friends and who are their enemies. In their ignorance, they may make a few mistakes, attack the wrong target, but eventually they'll make proper decisions.

The oppressors will try to fool them. They'll send messages of patriotism or religion. Fireworks of distraction will tell them the enemy is out there: another nation, another religion, another race, but a time will come when they are not distracted.

Meanwhile, the working class, those by whose labor the upper class lives. They'll be the vanguard. They'll speak and organize and fight against the ivory towered masters of capital.

Have you got the right column? Shouldn't this be Lefty Hooligan (aka George Impulse)?

It's pure Capital-C communism, right? Yeah, but it ain't George Impulse. It's another George: Romero.

I've never written a column about a movie before, but I was so amazed at *Land Of The Dead*, that I'm giving it as much space as a Dominican blowjob.

It's not the kind of movie that will be spoiled in the telling. There are no who-done-its. No surprise twist. Nothing to spoil.

To read the reviews, critics are either idiots or liberals. (A pleonasm we'll get to later.) The metaphors couldn't be more blatant if they gave you a blowjob.

In this zombie movie the zombies get organized. They start to work together, recognizing their strength. Clusters of zombies become self-aware, and aware of the power of the masses, aware of their oppression. But how often do the words *masses* and *oppression* belong in a zombie movie?

The main organizer is a colored zombie, played by Eugene Clark. He was a gas station attendant while alive, a nice proletarian job.

The movie starts with a scavenging group of working-class mercenaries. Their job: harvest things from the land over-ridden by flesh-eaters. They collect these things to sell to the rich. One of them, Cholo, (played like a motherfucker by John Leguizamo), aspires to be rich himself.

These are working-class mercenaries—the same kind of people fighting the zombies in the Mideast today.

In order to distract the movie zombies so they can take advantage of them, the scavengers shoot off fireworks. The zombies stop eating whoever and just gaze at the sky, held in awe. (Get it? Waving the flag of patriotism to distract the lumpen.)

[Note: I see this movie on July 4th. The theater is empty. Most of New York is out, watching the fireworks display.]

Then the scavengers scoop up food, booze, and whatever else they can sell to the rich people, before killing a few zombies and skedaddling back to town.

Town is a bunch of slums for the workers, around a huge rich people's complex called Fiddler's Green. (Nero *fiddled* while Rome burned. Get it?) Electrical fences seal the town on one side. The other two sides are rivers.

In the center is Fiddler's Green, a giant luxury project built in a tower. (Tower. Get it?) Dennis Hopper plays Kaufman, the boss of Fiddler's Green. He's a Donald Trumpish real estate tycoon whose main interest is getting and keeping money. He's a 100% sleaze bag who doesn't give a shit about anyone but himself. Throughout the movie, he's constantly knocking off his "friends."

At one point, Cholo steals a security vehicle and threatens to destroy the tower unless Kaufman forks over big bucks. Kaufman answers, "We don't negotiate with terrorists." (If you don't get that one, quit here and turn to the record reviews.)

Meanwhile, the zombies organize and prepare for their own invasion of Fiddler's Green. Being zombies—and having already died—they slowly figure out that they don't have to worry about drowning in the river. They mass at the river's edge and jump in.

When the residents of Fiddler's Green find out about the invasion, they panic and run. But they can't go far because of the electric fence. Says one of the scavengers, "What protects them keeps them prisoner." (G.I.?)

There's plenty more. And with propaganda this good—and this gory—I've become inspired by Communism. And there's another reason:

A couple years ago, I wrote a column about coming out liberal. In that column I said that when I looked at myself, when I put all the pieces together, I found myself to be a liberal.

I believe in personal freedom: freedom of speech, assembly, drug use, sex, anything that doesn't hurt anyone who doesn't want to be hurt. Pure ACLU.

On the other hand, I believe the government should control corporations. There should be strict laws against polluting the

environment, selling products that injure people, putting employees at risk. That's liberal, right?

I also believe in a living minimum wage, government support of those who can't work, a penal system based on compassion, not punishment, a foreign policy that stresses world cooperation, not world dominance.

I believe in the right to abortion, the right to choose your death, the separation of church and state. I hate Wal-Mart. I don't like war. Jezus fuckin' Christ, how much more liberal can you get?

Why is it then, when I see or hear my fellow liberals, I immediately feel like I have to take a shower? Why is it when I listen to *Air America* or get a mailing from the *Democratic National Committee*, my stomach twists like the morning after a night of Brooklyn Lager?

Last month I wrote about the dangers of "working with the other side." My pal Marc sent me an email after that column. In that email, he said that one of the benefits of working with them is that we can see them as humans, instead of having both sides look at each other as *The Great Satan*. Dialogue is humanizing. Good point.

But there is a difference between dialogue, and cooperation. And an even bigger difference between cooperation and caving in. America's liberals have caved in.

I walk down Bleecker Street. On the side of one of the few remaining payphones is a picture of Paul Newman. There he is, in country drag. Wearing a flannel shirt, blue jeans and some dorky straw hat. I'm too far from the advert to see what he's pushing. Maybe his organic salad dressing. Maybe some new way to save the whales. My 65-year old heart threatens to beat its last when I see what it is: an ad for McDonald's. Huh? The great super-sized Satan itself. Paul Newman is advertising McDonald's.

Bang. I run home and see what *The New York Times* has to lie about this.

"In an effort to burnish its tarnished image on Wall Street and Main Street, McDonald's has formed a partnership with...Paul Newman. Mr. Newman has agreed to sell McDonald's a line of salad dressing."

The great site prwatch.org adds:

"The partnership does give an aura of wholesomeness to McDonald's and its food," says the food and science writer Michael Pollan.

"All this is about buying the image of Paul Newman," Mr. Pollan says. "McDonald's is in the hole. It is trying to freshen and go upscale. It's redoing its flavor profile, making it more sophisticated and giving it an aura of health-consciousness and virtue."

Okay. I get why it's good for McDonald's. Makes tons of PR sense. Might even snag a liberal or two, though I can't imagine Al Franken eating at McDonald's. But what's in it for Newman? Why in hell would he allow his picture to be used by the American corporate monster?

Sure, some charity gets the profits from his sales. But for every tree saved by those profits, twenty are cut down to feed the extra cows mulched to feed the liberals who come in because of Newman's picture.

The press release on Newman's own site (www.newmansown.com/McDonald's.htm) doesn't give a hint. It's written like McDonald's is a social service organization. What could possibly have possessed the king of Hollywood liberals to do such a thing? But wait, there's more.

Safe, legal, and rare. That's the new rallying cry of liberals on abortion. Instead of making the procedure as nothing as clipping your nails, it's now a horror to be avoided.

Caving in to conservatives, liberal voices in Congress and the Senate now seem willing to overturn Roe v. Wade. The Internet is full of sites that proclaim, "Liberals ready to abandon US right to abortion."

It's the Clinton strategy: they can't fight us if we become them.

Speaking of Clinton. Hillary now supports the US in Iraq and wants to keep our troops there till the cows come home. What's left? Maybe it's time to listen to the two Georges! Not Bush, but Impulse—and Romero. Liberalism is dead. Long live the Land of the Dead.

ENDNOTES: [*Visitors to my website: mykelboard.com or subscribers (email to: god@mykelboard.com) will receive a few extra endnotes. There are just too many to keep up with.*]

My kinda protest dept: I just found this in my computer. It's a report from 2004. I think Ted sent it to me. It's a true story.

Two people took off most of their clothes and climbed to the top of a tree in Central Park, drawing hundreds of onlookers and keeping dozens of police officers and rescue workers busy for hours.

The couple, one clad in a thong and the other in boxer shorts, climbed 35 feet into a pine tree. The two people, identified by the police as a 32-year old man with feminine breasts and a 17-year old boy, shouted threats at rescue workers and drank soft drinks. They also had oral sex, witnesses told the police.

"Don't come any closer," one man yelled, and then threatened to jump. At one point a police officer handed him a dark shirt, which he put on. He then dropped his underwear, which the officer caught. Eventually they came down and were arrested.

Inspector William Callahan said the two people were taken to New York Weill Cornell Center for psychiatric evaluation, and charges were pending.

So that's harassment dept: Ah yes, the wonders of sexual harassment. Censorship News (www.ncac.org) reports that a northern California 6th graders was charge with sexual harassment for bring a copy of the 30-year old teen romance novel, *Forever* to school to lend to a friend.

Speaking of censorship dept: It has long been the mantra of censors that what they're doing isn't really censorship. Often they say it's "child protection." More often they say it's only censorship "if the government does it." If private enterprise does it, it's "the marketplace."

Well, the marketplace can be a bigger censor than the government. If the only outlet people have for music is Wal-Mart, and Wal-Mart won't carry certain music—or requires censored versions of the music it does carry—then the censorship is complete.

The conservatives say, if you don't like Wal-Mart, you can always go to the Internet. But how can you look for something if you don't know it exists? If you don't know Wal-Mart (or Blockbuster) has its own, censored, versions of things you like, how are you going to know to look for the originals?

This has become more insidious as software makers are now selling video and DVD modifier programs that will remove "offensive" parts from movies without the viewer ever knowing it.

In Denmark, it is illegal for anyone but the filmmaker to cut a film. But the US isn't Denmark. Too bad.

July 2005 Citizen Fish Tour Diary

CITIZEN FISH must be my fertility band or something. Just like when I went on tour with them in the fall of 1999 while pregnant with my now five-year-old girl,

this summer's tour outing with the band found me pregnant yet again. For sure, they must think it's just a ploy to get out of carrying anything over 20 pounds. I promise it's not, but it certainly does the trick! The trade off, I suppose, is that pregnancy also gets me out of partaking in the nightly swill. Forced sobriety among enthusiastic drinkers might not sound like such a good time, but among this crew of hilarious and happy drunks, it's top entertainment.

My adventure started with me lugging my pack and sax from the airport and onto buses and subways and finally out onto West 42nd Street in NYC to try to find the club where I was supposed to meet up with the band. Just as I was getting my wimpy on, due to the 25 pounds on my back, 25 more slung up over my shoulder, and the too hot summer heat I thought I had left behind in the South Florida Early Hurricane Season tropics not mixing too well with my early pregnancy nausea, I looked around me to see groups of young, black-clad punks with immaculately coifed 'hawks coming up from every subway stop all walking towards the same direction.

Hoping the club was close; I instinctively followed their lead. Thankfully, just as my wimp was turning to wilt, I was led to where I needed to be. What a bizarre sight it was to see postcard-perfect looking punks swarming outside a club situated smack dab in the middle of 21st Century scrub-a-dub-dubbed Times Square waiting for hours before doors were due to open. Bizarre, yes, but also comforting to see the SUBHUMANS being presumably a "starter" band for a good number of these young punks, just as they were for me 20 years ago. (Tonight's show was the last show of the SUBHUMANS tour and tomorrow would begin the CITIZEN FISH leg of the tour. We'd take Trotsky to the airport in the morning so he could get home to his seven-month old baby, Lucy; Bruce would be drumming for CF instead.)

The night was most excellent. From the all-vegetarian Chinatown restaurant where fellow anarcha-mama Vikki took me to the place we crashed for the night (an apartment/rooftop combo at the top of a seventeen-story building in Little Korea practically next door to the Empire State Building) and all the bands in between, (LEFTOVER CRACK, WORLD INFERNO FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY, FROM ASHES RISE, and SUBHUMANS) it was a perfect beginning to a week of shows on the road, something I hadn't had the pleasure of partaking in for just over two years.

Allentown: The night before I left home, I tried on all the pants I wanted to bring before I packed them. I wanted to be sure I had enough breathing room. There was plenty, but a whopping 48 hours later; it looked as if I had swallowed some Whoppers. I couldn't even button the top button. Yeah, I know the rubber band waist extender trick, but even that was already uncomfortable. There was no other option than walking around all week with my pants half undone.

When I called my mom's house to check up on my girl, she couldn't be bothered to talk to me. I was disappointed for about a full second. I quickly realized that her preoccupation was a good thing. I felt secure knowing that she was content where she was, able to be independent of me. There were years when that wouldn't have even been close to happening.

Oh yeah, the show. First off, when I heard we were playing Allentown, I wondered why the hell we were playing a ghost town. All I knew was that stupid ol' Billy Joel had told us decades ago that the place had shut down. Goes to show you just how far under the mama rock my head's been stuck. With the Pirate's Cove, Allentown's got it going on.

It epitomized perfect DIY punk in every way—thoughtfully prepared food for the bands, a trip to the town swimming pool, the grey water system in the house that had us riding bikes to take our shits across the street at the Wawa and it's exploding basement pipes drenching us on the very first song, a bio-diesel filtering system, a zine and music distro, the big house dog that climbed on top of me to give my leg the humparella, a few local bonehead hecklers, and a basement full of sweaty punks with four bands' worth of music (COFFIN BOUND, DECONDITIONED, LUCKY #2, MISCHIEF O BREW & us).

Philly: First things first, Karoline escorted us to the place where we could get veggie Philly cheese steaks topped with broccoli rabe. The girl really knows how to look out for my pregnant eating machine self, just like last time. A rather huge bonus for a pregnant someone on tour is to be out with a band that seeks out the local digs, food co-ops and health food stores. So what did Karoline and I do after eating our subs? We sought out a health food store and stocked up for the next day's long drive.

When I called to check in with my girl today, I got a little more than I did yesterday, "Hi, Mom, I'm going swimming, bye!" Excellent; I'm guilt-free.

The show was at The Fire. From what I overheard, The Fire's not used to having punk shows and they were nervous with memories of the CASUALTIES show from a couple years back. They needed to relax; we're practically Senior Citizen Fish. COFFIN BOUND, WITCH HUNT, and AMATEUR PARTY played too. I thought the tough looking full room would be hard to win over, but they seemed to have a great, sweaty, dancing time.

A margarita happy hour across town called us and about 20 or 30 others to pack out of the club PDQuickly after the show. I would have gone back to Greg's to crash were it not for the half price Mexican food after 11 pm. They got their fill; I got mine.

Boston: Food first, then find the show. The Grasshopper did us right. My pants would be getting tighter every day even if I weren't pregnant. It's actually amazing that I'm eating better on tour than I do at home; it wasn't always like that. Kids do change everything.

I think my girl is just starting to miss me. She was the one who answered the phone and let me know that she had not only been to her cousin's house but also to see the Dragon Tales Live show and now on her way out to eat with a quick, "Talk to ya later, Mom, oh yeah, love you!"

When I first heard that the show got switched from the Cambridge Elks Lodge to a house called the Library, I thought it would be a miscommunication disaster. Shame on me for underestimating the power of the time tested and proved punx word-of-mouth communications system.

I got to meet a couple fellow columnists there, Al and Erika. Kinda small worldish that Al was heading to Florida the next day and would be at the same baseball game my sweetie 'Nesto and his dad would be at. Erika was there with the La Rivolta! Collective doing their first ever attempt to table at a show and they hooked me up with my first XL maternity shirt and plenty of anarcha-feminist reading, yeah! And there were even some Hoggtowne hometowners there. Hello, Mikey Hot Sauce, & Erica!

We shared a packed sweat lodge of a basement with CIRIL, DECONDITIONED, WAR SQUAD, and Sweden's finest hardcore band SKITKIDS. This had to be the best show of the week due to the energy that melded the band, the rump shakers, and the belting-out-every-lyric-at-the-top-of-your-lung-ers into one. The finest moment was when I looked up from where I was playing, wedged in between the bass amp and the snare drum, to see Dick singing his heart out while fully embraced

in a bouncing circle of what looked like the most fun the entire planet had to offer right at that moment. It took me back to the Hardback, say an early '90s RADON show.

NYC: It's a damn mystery why I woke up so early and took a shower. Those two things, especially those two things together, are on my top five list of things that will ruin a day. Perhaps it was the snoring SKITKIDS around me on the floor at Ben from DROP DEAD's house in Providence that motivated me to not linger there among them in some vain attempt to snooze some more, but it's totally unexplainable why I feel like I'm in a good mood; there's no reason for it!

I joined Dick in the beautiful backyard morning sunshine and sat in a chair in the grass next to last night's fire pit. I saw the pressed down grass that served as evidence of where both Dick and Jasper has slept. Wow, from the looks of the big ass ants out there, I'm impressed they didn't get all bit up.

I called home but my girl was already out kayaking with Grandpa Bobby. No wonder she wanted to go to their house instead of coming with me on tour. They always dote on her, spoil her, and revolve their worlds around her for the days she's there. That's the grandparents' job I suppose, but I do get a little jealous sometimes. That must be my only-child syndrome coming out. Whhaaaa, they don't do those things with me and I was their kid first!

We piled in the van early and made it to ABC No RIO in NYC by 3 pm, the time we needed to be there for the matinee. The garden in the back was beautiful, the vibe was perfect and I was most excited to see the PROFIT$. It was a packed room and the floor was surprisingly flexible and more pleasantly surprisingly sturdy. Too much fun; I wish I could remember who else played!

The super fans were there again, their fourth show this week. They know the lyrics better than the band members do, except for Dick of course. I remember the three super fan boys from the '99 tour. They were the ones who outside of the Philly show at the Unitarian Church suggested that my pregnant self shouldn't be out on tour carrying crates and offer to carry the load for me. Then, I let them verbally have it; now, I let them carry all they wanted.

After the show, I got to talk to Arwen about some writing projects, Fly about her comics, surviving and healing, Vikki about anarcha-mamahood and meet her four-year old daughter, and Mikey Hot Sauce wanted to know all about being a pregnant mama on tour and making shows more accessible to parents and young kids.

I told him that if I were helping operate a house that did regular shows and it was pretty obvious that the scene where we were located had at least a handful of parents with kids, just like things like feeding the band, working the door and setting up the PA would all be considered, then having kid provisions would be considered, too. This might be anything from having a chill-out room in the house where kids could get away from the loudness if they wanted to a volunteer to take the kids out for a walk or to a playground. (After five years of parenthood. It's still a bummer to not get to go to that many shows. It's somewhat ironic that a youth culture like DIY punk wouldn't be more younger-kid friendly.)

Arwen, Aaron, and I walked to Kate's Joint and joined Chris(tine) and Erika at a table where I proceeded to eat large amounts of collard greens, sweet potatoes, rice, and meatless loaf. Eight hours later, that loaf would make its presence known again in the form of some seriously noxious gas clouds that filled the room in such a way that I was sure everyone in Simon's Brooklyn apartment would be woken up and they'd toss me out. Good thing everyone else but me had been out drinking until 5:30 am and wouldn't have been woken up by anything short of a wrecking ball.

Pittsburgh: Robert rolled us outta bed quite early. Unfortunately, I had been up since 5:30 am; my exploding ass wouldn't let me go back to sleep. We wrangled bagels, dropped Chris(tine) off somewhere over the Williamsburg bridge to catch her bus back to Richmond, and Robert drove the long hours to Pittsburgh while the rest of us snoozed or punned about gnomes. *What do you call a balding man's attempt at a hair do? A gnome-over.*

My little gnome called me today. 6 days away from each other and she's really starting to miss me now – 10 days is usually the limit. Daddy 'Nesto picked her up from my parents and brought her home with him. They started the "3 days until Mommy's home" countdown.

We rolled into Pittsburgh and immediately sought out the health food co-op. Then we pulled a double header, an early all ages show at the Mr. Roboto project with KIM PHUC (look for an interview with mama drummer Stephanie in this here column in a few months), CARPENTER ANT and HTML and a later, free 21+ bar show at the Smiling Moose with KIM PHUC and CAUSTIC CHRIST. Both crowds looked hard to win over but both, say by the fourth song, were dancing it up like crazy fools. And for the record, CAUSTIC CHRIST pretty much ruled. All four of them totally rip freakin-a-amazingly—they blasted their songs to the nth degree individually so that together it exploded!

The rest of the band took advantage of the unlimited free bar drinks while I passed out in the van. Between the sweltering heat wave and the bar smoke, I felt like a supreme pile of nauseous, sleep-deprived, pregnant shit.

After the bar closed, they all piled into the van. Dick was beyond entertaining in his uber-drunk-for-the-second-night-in-a-row state and had us all cracking the fuck up the whole way to Corey's house, my most favorite of all houses ever with the most elaborate wood floors and embossed leather like wallpaper on the walls. (It's across the street from the Frick mansion and is the mansion's servant house I believe. You know, Frick as in Henry Clay Frick, the union-busting-bastard-bossman who Alexander Berkman attempted to assassinate and wound up serving over 20 years in prison for.) The thing with Dick is that he's a really sharp guy whose mind doesn't get dull and sloppy while under the influence. He's just as sharp and a whole hell of a lot funnier, dropping into ridiculous voices, characters, and animated gestures. The way he explained taking on the nickname Dick instead of Rich or Richey at age nine was priceless. A sweet, innocent kid, he really had no idea Dick was another nickname for penis.

Phil and I sat on the porch eating the good Thai food Corey had made for us. I snarfed down two bowls and talked Phil's ear off about parent-related stuff. He's so sweet, receptive, and was even participatory. I could stand to learn some lessons from him. In every circumstance, he proves to be a no-nonsense, genuine, no shit-talking, tolerant guy who seemingly always finds the good in everyone instead of being dismissive due to their quirks. We joined the others out back in the secret hangout. Phil was snoring in less than five minutes and I stayed until it started to rain.

Chicago: First thing in the morning, Phil and Dick confessed that everything was fine until Corey pulled out the weed at 4:30 am. According to Dick, after that,

the night just sort of stretched into morning like elastic. I couldn't sympathize; I miss getting rubbery.

It was another long drive day and Bruce and I spent the breaks at rest stops talking about the early days of Phil and him being school boys together in Warminster and how when the SUBHUMANS stopped playing together in '86, it felt like punk was dying out. They had toured what seemed like a lot to them, including in the States, and had released several records, the landmark being *Cradle to the Grave*. (One of the first punk records I ever got my hands on.) Bruce said their popularity soared after they were broken up and the reason the Subhumans "reunited" in '98 was in response to their continued popularity. He said they didn't do it only to see what money could be made, but in response to their music already having been kept alive and to see what it would be like twelve years later, how different their undying and continued fan support would be from when they stopped in '86.

We went on to talk about how CITIZEN FISH was a natural extension of Dick embracing the punk and DIY aesthetic, and how he never stopped playing through the years (with CULTURE SHOCK and CITIZEN FISH), and how new song writing is done more with CITIZEN FISH and less with SUBHUMANS (only four new songs recorded [?] since '86).

Next thing I knew, we were pulling into the Ice Factory in Chicago. More like the Fire Furnace if you ask me. I was laid out on the couch with extreme heat-melt and smoke-in-the-venue pregnancy nausea. I very uncharacteristically couldn't even eat the amazing homemade enchiladas that Miriam had made for us.

I escaped outside where it was much cooler and called home. My girl answered and was super excited to talk to me. She squealed in my ear, "Two more days!" Setting a record, we talked for like 15 minutes.

I felt better during the show because CONDENADA was absolutely great! Every time Miriam gave a knee-melting scream, I caught myself smiling uncontrollably. I stocked up on a CD, shirts for both my girl and I, and a pin for her, too. Next up was FOURTH ROTOR, a three-piece with a female drummer who was absolutely great. The three of them were fast, furious, and intense. Go figure—the last show of the week would be the only show with females playing in every band.

After the show, Petesa and I got to chat it up for the first time in nearly three years. Then we all headed out for burritos with Jesse. Eat, talk, eat, talk, eat, talk and the next thing we know it was nearly 2 am. Time to drive home to the Team Collins Mansion—Robert and Karoline's place.

Milwaukee: Why oh why do I have to wake up earlier than I have to *and* after having less than eight hours of sleep? I stayed up and read zine after zine while everyone else was still snoozing.

One of the things I most enjoyed about this week was the opportunity to read for hours. Issue after issue of *MRR*, *Clamor*, *Heartattack*, a column or two in *Punk Planet*, a book I've been trying to finish for months, a few articles in other random music magazines, and a handful of random zines I picked up along the way. It may sound cheesy, but I feel a re-connection with my beloved DIY punk music scene that I've felt out of in terms of knowing new, good bands.

Plus, being around Robert for a whole week helped. I compiled quite a long shopping list of records after hanging out with him and was inspired by his tireless involvement in what he loves so much – music and contributing to the scene in very important, idealistic ways.

He and Karoline really spoil me. For a friend with whom I've never lived in the same town, but have been acquainted with for nearly 10 years, she's tops with me. Few people compare really with her thoughtfulness, dedication to whatever she does, her smarts (she is the hands-down queen of the pun), her habit of always seeming to be learning something new, and her all around bad-assness and well-grounded personality. If this pregnancy happens to yield twins, I'm giving one of them to Karoline and Robert! (I love them that much, heh heh. Plus, I've gotta pay back the injection of realism Robert gave me, "Look Jes, no matter what, you'll always be a geek; you play the sax…and in a ska punk band.)

When everyone was awake and ready, Jasper and I rode bikes to Fuel Café while everyone else drove. After we ate, Karoline had to work and Robert had to drive the boys back to Chicago to catch their flight back to Europe. Jasper and I biked home for naps instead of a bike adventure around Milwaukee; it was raining. Before we dozed of, we chatted it up about his upcoming appointment at the courthouse to get married next month. I shared my own getting-married-at-the-court-house story and wished him and his sweetie as much luck as we've had.

When I woke up, Robert was there to pick us up for the house show. We biked there and saw a couple of touring bands whose names I really wish I could remember right now because they were extremely loud and hard rockin'. We biked to eat at Comet where Karoline was still hard at work.

They boys biked to another show to see the Soviettes but I stayed and waited for Karoline to get off work. She drove us back to her house where we talk, talk, talked until neither one of us could stay awake any longer.

Heading home: I do realize what bad form it is to talk so extensively in a tour diary about food and eating lots of it. Maybe you can find some pity and forgiveness in your black, jaded hearts if you realize that instead of run-of-the-mill hunger pangs, I got pregnancy-induced nausea every three hours and food is the only thing that made it go away.

It was only a few days longer than a week, but I slipped into tour mode all too easily. As soon as I stepped off the plane in NYC, I felt right at home, even more safe and sound than I feel at home in South Florida most of the time. No thoughts about my job at the Birth Center (that I really do love), routine home life, or my projects even crossed my mind. It was like I left my casing at home and just was just an energy-seeking battery out getting recharged.

As the plane got closer to landing me back in Ft. Lauderdale, an unconscious smile plastered itself across my face with the simple, conscious thought of seeing 'Nesto and Emma-Joy's eager faces waiting for me.

Though I was only gone a very short time, it took me the same number of days to get used to being home again. It was heart-swelling-sweet to be so lavished with smooches from 'Nesto and E-J, but I was somewhat overwhelmed at how much people seemed to miss me at work. At first I couldn't tell if it was just because they had a hard time running the office without me, but then I realized how lucky I am to be part of such a tight-knit community the midwives in South Florida make up, in a place of utter urban sprawl and disconnection. And how damn lucky am I to get to step out of it so easily and back into a place where I always feel at home—on the road with some of the most awesome friends ever.

Thank you, Fishies family. Here's to next time!

Punkparents, get in touch.

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No.

Field Journal, 2005

Day One, 1:00 p.m.

First field day, and what a doozy. I was told that the alpha male for this group creates a lot of problems for photographers, and that was no exaggeration—this guy is ridiculous. The first thing he did after I set up my tripod was to hurl an extended volley of his own feces in my general direction, almost as if he saved up a pile in anticipation. I suppose he must have, as this type is known for compiling large quantities of feces to use in sealing holes in their "bunkers," as we like to call them from this lens. According to the reports and previous research, this is nothing new and, indeed, nothing personal. Establishing this sort of dominance is instinctual for them, and is a constant activity heedless to the immediate circumstances—I could just as easily have been a pigeon, and the display would have been exactly the same.

One would think they'd have learned to just ignore people doing what I'm doing by now; we're always slinking about and never directly interfering in their activities. However, I suppose that's why he is the alpha—he's quite consistent in his displays of mindless aggression. I got a couple of good shots of the shit being flung, mid-volley. Had to call it a day once a big chunk hit the lens, though, requiring a retreat to the van for technical assistance.

Day Two, 9:15 a.m.

The alpha is running a bit late today; he is generally supposed to be here by 9 a.m. at the latest. This is giving me an opportunity to look at other individuals in the area, an area of study that is sorely underrepresented in the literature. Sexual dimorphism appears to be high in this group; the females stirring about are perhaps only half the size of the alpha, though that could be an illusion of exaggerated stature on the alpha's part via his clever utilization of height-enhancing topographic features of the area where he generally makes his morning appearance. Apparently it's quite difficult to get a good measurement of him otherwise, as he tends to slink off out of sight with a consort of subservient males shortly after his routine. I have spied one female who seems to have some dominant characteristics of her own, but she remains out of sight most of the time and only appears occasionally to display her intimidating canines and a substantive gap between her front teeth (quite terrifying in context).

Day Two, 10:30 a.m.

The alpha finally made his appearance, for a short time, but with a heavy impact—nothing but a prolonged display of his oddly shaped, bright crimson genitalia to the rest of the group (and anyone else who happened to be observing). According to the literature, this strong red color functions as a high "alert level" to others of the species, and particularly to the subservient members of his group. It indicates that an outside threat is imminent, and generally serves to function as a "rallying point" for the alpha for several days. This effectively quashes any challenges to his authority/dominance—after all, if the whole troop is on the lookout all day for (often nonexistent) enemies, where is the time for other potential alphas to be effective rivals to the current alpha? Very clever, for one of his species. The pictures are clear, but quite difficult to look at nonetheless and likely unpublishable – the shriveled, inflamed genitals are just too much. The journals, however, are full of color pictures of this display in close-up. I just don't understand how they'd have the nerve to publish it. Maybe in a nice black and white…

Day Six, 9:00 a.m.

Following a three-day absence, made defensible by Day Two's genital display, the alpha reappears at his usual place and resumes the feces volleys with renewed vigor. In addition, prominent agonistic displays of his eyebrows and dagger-like canines are evident between each feces volley. These displays seem directed at all in the vicinity, but particularly at us. I grow weary of chest-beating and cleaning feces off of my face by 9:25 a.m., and retreat to the safety of the van.

The weather is unbearable, and the alpha's howls in the distance grate on me. I am aware that as a professional I am supposed to retain a semblance of neutrality and silent observer status, but this is just too much. I am starting to genuinely hate the alpha. This research is proving difficult.

Day Seven, 8:15 p.m.

The display of chest-beating this morning was not particularly noteworthy, but the alpha did seem to take increased note of me personally as his gesticulations drew to a close. Improbably, it seems, he may have "read" the look of disgust on my face as I took my pictures. At 7:30 p.m., as I was eating my dinner in the field shortly after dark, a group of subservient males who had earlier been foraging about near the "dominance platform" (as I have taken to calling the topographic feature the alpha mounts each morning to do his display) seemingly responded to a loud, screeching call from the darkness and rushed forward towards me in a coordinated fashion. Two of them knocked me down, while a third commenced to jump about on my face. Fortunately for me, I had my trusty rape horn handy, and its sheer volume seemed enough to scare them off. I am now covered in bruises, my nose may be broken, and rabies could be a serious concern from the bites. During the attack, watching from the sidelines was the dominant, gap-toothed female, grunting approvingly.

Day Eight, 9:45 a.m.

Only eight days into this assignment, and my day of reckoning has arrived. Literally three minutes into the alpha's display this morning, he hurled a particularly large, particularly hard chunk of feces directly at me and hit me square on my broken nose. I simply could no longer contain my rage as blood gushed down from my nose and all the onlookers grunted in approval.

I leaped forward, knocked over the alpha's podium, and managed to get one good punch in before the subservient males tackled me, pinning me to the ground as the alpha ripped a huge chunk of flesh from my camera hand with his massive canines. He then proceeded to eat it right in front of me, while his subservients kicked me off the platform. I ran off and drove myself to the hospital with one working arm, and am now getting stitches and waiting for the police to arrive.

Day Ten, 5:30 a.m.

What a completely miserable job that was, and now here I am being awakened at five in the morning. If I ever get out of this weird mystery jail where they keep flushing books down the toilet, I'm going straight back to primatology. Presidential photojournalism sucks.

—Johnny Apple Tree, PO Box 3026, Oakland, CA 94609, johngeek@hotmail.com. For an archive of some of the old NO columns, take a look at www.myspace.com/noarchive. I know, I know, it's Myspace but it's also free blog space.

George Bush...Fuck you!

I'm thinking of the Oi Polloi song, and yes, I know it was about the first George Bush, not Dubya, and there was also "John Major... Fuck You," about the British Prime Minister, set to the same music. Ranting against lousy politicians is a timeless part of punk rock and hardcore. At least it should be. Jesus fucking christ, especially in these times of insanity. Hell, remember all those great anti-Reagan songs? When the old bastard finally kicked the bucket last year, I was able to easily fill two hours of my radio show with every anti-Reagan song I could think of and had a few more the week after. Reagan continues to inspire—as I mention in the DIRECT CONTROL review below, there's a final nail in the coffin, so to speak—"Ronnie's Dead."

It's a pattern lately—this column seems to be covering the latest outrage, at least from my perspective. You're going to hear about it, whether you like it or not.

Getting back to Bush, though, there I was, listening to the so-called progressive talk station the other morning and the fill-in host for Stephanie Miller was an old Boston punk rocker named Johnny Angel (he played in THRILLS and the BLACKJACKS), only the powers-that-be at the media conglomerate who host the show make him use the name "Johnny Wendell." I mean, Angel isn't his given name either (it's Carmen) but it really sucks when you can't even decide what you want to call yourself. But Johnny went along with it. His call, I suppose, and he has bills to pay. He's actually been doing a good job and it's a national broadcast. I'm sure his listenership is a fraction of the right-wing lowlifes but it's good to have a dissenting opinion out there, even if it's on a motherfucking Clear Channel station (ugh).

Anyway, during his show, the news broke that President Dumbya had appointed John Bolton to be the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations. The country's chief diplomat. Bush couldn't get the appointment through Congress, so he took advantage of the Congressional recess to appoint Bolton without a Senate vote. A loophole that needs to be closed. Snuck him in, during a time when people might not be paying attention. After all, it's vacation time; people are away and not probably not getting a lot of news. As if the general public *ever* paid attention to the fucking news—I mean, how else do these asshole politicians get away with absolute bloody murder every single day? Besides the fact that the mainstream press doesn't do a whole lot of reporting on what's really going on? So we're stuck with Bolton until the end of the next Congressional session, which means January of 2007.

This Bolton is quite a prize. He has a pretty bad reputation preceding him. A career right-wing scumbag. A sabre rattler. Bolton was one of the lawyers involved in stopping the vote count in Florida in 2000—you know, the election where Bush ended up getting appointed by the Supreme Court. He's a bully, as well. Anecdotes abound about his less-than-congenial manner. Talk host Randi Rhodes described him as being a "child" and went on to say "he's one of those mean little brats who spit on other kids in the lunch room." There's one widely circulated story from 1994 involving a woman named Melody Townsel. She wrote a letter to the Senate Foreign Relations committee during the confirmation process. According to a story on Truthout.org by Marjorie Cohn on 4/18, *"Townsel, stationed in Kyrgyzstan on a U.S. AID project, became the object of Bolton's wrath in 1994. After she complained about the incompetence, poor contract performance, and inadequate funding of the project by a contractor who happened to be represented by John Bolton, Townsel met Bolton. She wrote that Bolton "proceeded to chase me through the halls of a Russian hotel throwing things at me, shoving threatening letters under my door, and generally behaving like a madman." Townsel also claimed Bolton falsely charged that she was headed for federal prison for misuse of funds, and threatened that other key employees or contractors would also find themselves the target of federal investigations if they refused to cooperate with him. Townsel maintained that Bolton's behavior "wasn't just unforgivable, it was pathological."*

There are other stories of abuse, but I don't have the space to recount them. Needless to say, he probably doesn't have the temperament to be a diplomat. Bolton doesn't even believe in the mission of the U.N. He's called it irrelevant, and in a 1994 speech, made the following statement: *"There is no such thing as the United Nations. There is an international community that occasionally can be led by the only real power left in the world and that is the United States when it suits our interest and we can get others to go along."* He also said, "If the U.N. secretary building in New York lost ten stories, it wouldn't make a bit of difference."

I won't even bother discussing the guy's hideous pushbroom mustache, which is a different color than the suspect-looking hair on top of his head. Let's just stick to the record....

When even Republicans such as Ohio Sen. George Voinovich have doubts about the guy, you know something's up. Voinovich is on the Senate Foreign Relations committee and, in May, that committee voted to send Bolton's nomination to the entire Senate without a recommendation. At the time, Voinovich said, "It is my opinion that John Bolton is the poster child of what someone in the diplomatic corps should not be," and also said, "The United States can do better than John Bolton." Indeed... And with the death and carnage continuing in Iraq, do we really need a consummate warmonger in the U.N.?

Mitt Romney...Fuck you!

Closer to home—my home, that is—Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney continues to position himself further to the right, gearing up for a Presidential run in 2008. He's given support to yet another attempt to abolish gay marriage in Massachusetts. The right-wing, misnamed Massachusetts Family Institute (what right do these cretins have to decide what constitutes a family?) has filed a ballot initiative that would define marriage as being between a man and woman. And he continues his attack on poor people—health insurance is the latest frontier. A *Boston Globe* article from August 2 talks about how Romney is "moving to change the rules for a 'free care' program in ways that advocates say could make it harder for the uninsured to get healthcare." This formerly free program would now have $3 to $5 co-payments, which may not sound like much, but the *Globe* report says these co-payments "can scare away poorer patients. In addition, some patients who currently get services through the state's free-care program, but have other options for coverage, would be excluded, and prescription coverage for all uninsured would be restricted."

Romney's original intention was to find a way to provide health coverage to the half-million uninsured Mass. residents, which sounds benevolent on the surface. But a June *Globe* article painted a slightly different picture... It said that *"Massachusetts residents who choose not to obtain health insurance would face tax penal-*

ties and even the garnishing of their wages... Romney says the "individual mandate" he is proposing, part of his broader plan to cover the roughly 500,000 people who are uninsured, would not cost the state any money. But some healthcare specialists say the approach might cost hundreds of millions of dollars more than state taxpayers currently provide for government health coverage... Romney's plan would require all residents in Massachusetts to have some form of health insurance or agree to pay their medical bills out of their own pockets. No other state has such a requirement, and if Romney manages to make it law, it would be a compelling accomplishment he could point to if he runs for president."

Bingo! And it's more punitive than helpful, if you believe the John McDonough, executive director of the Boston-based advocacy group Health Care for All: *"The administration is legitimately and laudably interested in expanding coverage to more people, but, at the same time, they are widening the cracks into which people will fall."*

My wife Ellen, who is a social worker, was cursing out loud when reading about this proposal—her clients, most of whom are in dire economic straits, will likely be hurt by these proposals. The end result is they often won't be able to get the health care they need. Another obstacle, another catch-22, courtesy of our wonderful governor. The SOB probably won't even run for re-election, as he moves further to the right. Too far right for this state but probably still perceived as a moderate in other parts of the country. Ironic, ain't it?

Finally, something to cheer—good records!

ANOTHER OPPRESSIVE *SYSTEM* - *Discography 2000-2004* (Profane Existence, CD)

An underrated band from Connecticut who have put out a series of 7"s and splits and they're all compiled here, from newest to oldest, and they've clearly evolved as a band, while maintaining a similar approach throughout. That style is pillaging Scandi-crust-core with a pair of howling vocalists, a wall of guitar fury, and cage-rattling drumming, accompanied by lyrics that explore society's fucked-up nature but also urge to take control of one's life and not spend it as a spectator. The earliest recordings, recorded for a split with 3 Way Cum, almost border on inept but they really found their footing with their first 7" and split with World on Warfare and the most recent recordings, a split with Swedish band Crossing Chaos, are their most powerful to date. Looking forward to the upcoming album. (PO Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.profaneexistence.com)

BRODY'S MILITIA - *The Appalachian Twelve Gauge Massacre* (Sound Pollution, CD)

This is the best release, by far, for this Ohio band. Brody's Militia eases up on the speed a bit and it makes a big difference. There's still plenty of velocity but they've added some ferocious mid-tempo elements and wanton rock 'n' roll. One thing that won't change is they still hate humanity. Social climbers, phonies, "self-righteous pricks," as they put it, and politicians on both sides of the aisle. As an avowed leftist, I might say that the right is more of a problem, but I know where they're coming from and share quite a bit of their contempt. Loud, fast, pissed-off as all fuck. This is how it's done.
(PO Box 11742, Covington, KY 41017, www.sound-pollution.com)

BURIAL - *Never Give Up... Never Give In* (Deranged, CD)

Nope, not about to give up—tempting, but if Burial takes a defiant stand, why shouldn't we all make the effort? A somewhat metallic intro (shades of Judas Priest's "The Metallion") that leads into a fast paced hardcore punk attack. Some of those heavier guitar licks show up in other places, along with slightly more melodic moments ("Failure") but the emphasis is hard 'n fast. The fist is raised, the middle finger extended, and this is a solid dose of pure punk.
(1166 Chaster Road, Gibsons, BC V0N 1V4, CANADA, www.derangedrecords.com)

DIRECT CONTROL - *You're Controlled* (Kangaroo, LP) / *Nuclear Tomorrow* (Sorry State, 7" EP)

I'm not joking when I say this is one of the best new hardcore bands in a long time. Well, fairly new. Following up a demo and a killer, self-titled 7", Richmond band Direct Control has released an LP and 7" at around the same time. Early 80s-styled hardcore played with reckless enthusiasm—loud, fast and kicking ass from start to finish on both of these records. The LP gets started with their call to arms "Direct Control," leading into an anti-Reagan rant—yeah, anti-Reagan but this one's called "Ronnie's Dead," to keep things up to date. Getting political on the likes of "Herd The Cattle" and "War All The Time," while other songs explore personal interactions, assholes in the punk scene and even an ode to the music itself ("Like It Fast"). The 7" is slightly rougher sounding but continues in the same vein. Five more shredders and once again mixing up the lyrical content, from the pessimism of "Nuclear Tomorrow" and "World War 3" to the pro-skating sentiments of "Wicked Sick to The Gills." A straightforward sound but skillfully played, with catchy guitar licks and clever nicks from such bands as Poison Idea and the Circle Jerks. These guys are the real fucking deal.
(Kangaroo: Middenweg 13, 1098 AA Amsterdam, HOLLAND, www.geocities.com/tysonkangaroo. Sorry State: 1102 N Greensboro St., Carrboro, NC 27510, www.deepfrybonanza.com/sorrystate)

REGULATIONS (Havoc, LP)

A full-length—well, if 24 minutes is a full-length—but this is a killer album, following two equally impressive 7" EPs. Barbed, energetic punk rock drawing on both early 80s west coast and '77 era influences. The slashing, catchy guitar riffs are the main focus, along with Otto's gruff snarl. A taut, jabbing sound and, even in this framework, subtle wrinkles emerge—the nervous guitar line for "I Don't Need," the tense intro for "Police Siren" or the speedier tempo on "End It Now." The lyrics tell personal tales of alienation; also taking note of the world at large ("In 1945," "Police Siren," "No More Hell") and the compressed, stripped down sound belies the anger that's ready to erupt. All you jaded fucks who think there's no more worthwhile punk or hardcore should give this one a listen.
(PO Box 8585, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.havocrex.com)

SCURVY DOGS - *Relieve Yourself* (Tankcrimes, 7" EP)

Been a fan of this Bay Area band since seeing them at Mission Records in 2000 and they're still blasting away. Five new songs of angry hardcore punk. Fast and blistering, exuding frustration with daily life and taking a potshot at mindless xenophobia for "Would You Like Freedom Fries With That?" which discusses the idiocy of boycotting French products because that country opposed the misguided war in Iraq. Walloping.
(PO Box 22641, SF, CA 94122, www.tankcrimes.com)

SEND MORE COPS - *Demo 2005* (tape)

Up 'n coming Boston hardcore. Send More Cops has actually been playing out a few years but these are the first recordings with their (relatively) new guitarist Rob Noyes. Speedy and aggressive thrash, along with circle-pit inducing breakdowns and punctuated by Tommy's ranting vocals and Ryan's formidable drum

batterie. Seven new songs, along with nine more recorded in late '04 and it's a full-scale assault.
(898 Huntington Ave., Apt. 3, Boston, MA 02115, www.sendmorecops.tk)

SKITKIDS - *Valkomna Till Paradiset...* (540, 7" EP)

The latest blast from this Swedish wrecking ball is a four-song tour EP. I'm too lazy to type out song titles, but the first song is a mid-tempo rock 'n' roll meets hardcore blast and then they get down to thrashed-out mania for the second song with nary a second in transition. Same pattern on the flip—a rocker and a speed bomb that will flatten your head without any effort. Burning guitars, tasteful leads and ready to kill. (PO Box 143403, Austin, TX 78714, timmyva3@hotmail.com)

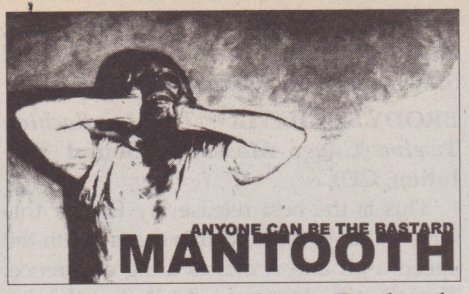
STRUNG UP - *Warfucked* (Tankcrimes, 7" EP)

The title track talks about how the "Reagan Era's back" and that's true in terms of the US foreign policy (only Bush has the U.S. in much more over our heads) and Strung Up's hardcore arsenal is a throwback, as well. There's an unhinged quality to their sound, a sense of danger and Strung Up approach the lyrics with both outrage and sarcasm. Raw and thumping and unafraid to add some guitar pyrotechnics, particularly for the last song, "Rock 'n' Roll The Toilet Bowl."
(PO Box 22641, SF, CA 94122, www.tankcrimes.com)

TOXIC NARCOTIC - *21st Century Discography* (TNR, CD)

All the recent releases on one disc—including the *We're All Doomed* album, *Shoot People Not Dope* EP and songs from the split with Misery. A digipak with no insert or other info, but it's a handy package and a devastating one at that. Lyric sheet? You don't need no stinkin' lyric sheet to realize Toxic Narcotic is mighty pissed off. TN continues to bludgeon and annihilate well into its second decade of existence. Raw, ugly hardcore punk that eschews melody for pure bile but you still find yourself singing along to the likes of "We're All Doomed," "Asshole," "Shoot People, Not Dope," etc. A few songs take a reggae-ish turn, which is something one wouldn't expect. Some love 'em, some hate 'em, and I'm proud to be in the first camp. (PO Box 1143, Allston, MA 02134, www.rodentpopsicle.com)

Al Quint, PO Box 2746, Lynn, MA 01903, suburbanvoice@earthlink.net.
Sonic Overload radio: sonicoverload.moocowrecords.com



The summer months in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, are particularly rough and can be best described by a noun+adjective combination of your choice. Preferably something that invokes the image of being choked by sweaty horse testicles. This year has been the worst in recent memory, causing most people to forego their T-shirts and lumber about secreting viscous substances from their pores and maws.

The heat does strange things to a person's mind. I won't pretend that I'm a doctor, but I can lie and tell you that I know lots of physicians that contend that high temperatures can actually morph one's brain into an inanimate object such as a boot or a fucking brick. These same medical professionals will also tell you that once this change occurs, they automatically become filled with the desire to seek me out and expose me to their…problems. The following anecdotes have either happened to me or a friend over the past few months and are intended to bore Matt Average. B33F.

Going to Jail: Admittedly, I work for *the man*. Now, *the man* obviously comes in a variety of a guises and I work for *the man* in the form of The Gap. Save your slings and arrows aimed at my punk credentials, though, for I only work stock. My duties include unloading and opening boxes from far away lands and swearing a whole bunch while mechanically drinking cup after cup of coffee. Such manly responsibilities require me to be up at 5:30 am, and for you lazy readers who have never been awake at this hour, it's quite a surreal time of the day. If you've ever seen the made-for-TV movie *The Langoliers* (featuring Bronson Pinchot getting eaten by gravity-defying gerbils with razor-teeth), you know what I'm talking about.

And so I'm sitting at the bus stop trying to enjoy my bagel while being choked by the atmosphere around me, as a young gentleman approaches me carrying nothing but a soiled, brown paper bag and asks if I smoke. Politely, I decline. The young man sits next to me and lets out a sigh and says gruffly,

"When the hell is the next bus coming?"

"Umm...the 61B should be here in about ten minutes."

"Where you going?"

"Work."

"Ah…*I'm going to jail!!!*" I sit there kind of shocked for a moment.

"Oh…man…that *sucks*!"

"Fuck yeah it does. I'm goin' to fuckin' jail!"

I sit there staring straight ahead of me. It's too early and my synapses are having trouble processing the fact that this man is going to jail and loves shouting this fact at me. We sit there silent for a few moments, when out of the corner of my eye, I see him staring at me.

"You...you ever been in love?"

"Uhh...sure...I guess."

"I was in love. *That's why I'm goin' to jail.* Lemme tell you something. You love a bitch don't mean you can let her be with someone else and shit. I love her. I..."

He gets a little choked up on the last word there, but then notices the clock on the Jewish community center across the street and starts laughing.

"Haw haw, is that Japanese or something?"

"Yeah, it's Japanese. It's a school for all the Japanese kids in Pittsburgh."

"Well fuck. These Japanese kids goin' to school *and I'm going to jail*!"

Just then I see the 61B roll up. So does he.

"You see that fuckin' bus, man? That shit is gonna turn. They always fuckin' turn when you hope they goin' straight. I'm fucking late for jail!"

Of course the bus goes straight.

"OH MY GOD IT WENT STRAIGHT!!"

Just then a very fragile looking old man shuffling by decided to parrot my soon-to-be incarcerated new-friend.

"Oooooh my gaaaaad it weeeent straaaaight heh heh heh heh heh heh ha ha ha ha ha!!!"

Killed By Subway: That same day, I'm waiting for another bus at "The Wall." This "Wall" is really nothing but just that: a wall. So you just keep your filthy nose out of where I hang out, OK? Anyway, to my left is a dude chomping on a Subway sandwich like there's no tomorrow. He's got mayo all over his face and he looks like he's in a voodoo trance, as if Jared the Subway Guy put a 12" cold cut combo spell on him. As soon as he's finished, some girl comes up to him and asks if the 61A has come by yet. He's obviously blown out of his (fucking) mind by some combination of booze, subway, crack, and/or weed.

"I seen it come by. Just not today. *Ha ha ha ha ha!*!"

Then he just lies down on the wall. Eyes wide open. Face still covered in mayonnaise. I don't notice until the bus finally comes that he doesn't really look like he's breathing. Just a lifeless stare into the trees. Being the callous observer of society that I am, I merely get on the bus because that sandwich made me very, very hungry. Later on that night, I was having pangs of humanity deep within my gut that may or may not have been indigestion; what if I watched man die and did nothing about it? Does this not make me just as bad as *the man*? Or should I take a much more jaded, FEAR-esque response to this man's death and perhaps write a song about my nonchalance in regards to death?

The next day, I walk by the wall again and find the man I formerly thought of as dead, sitting in the same spot eating another subway sandwich, still covered in mayonnaise.

Because You Wouldn't Help Me: Like the heat, retail settings seem to trigger animal instincts within the human brain, turning most normal individuals into slobbering nincompoops incapable of distinguishing friend from food. If you're interested in witnessing the worst behavior of humanity, go hang out at a department store for a few hours and watch people. Even though I work before The Gap opens and after it closes, I'm still told about incidents that happen after I'm gone. For instance, whenever a woman works the men's floor, dudes flock to that section of the store and insist on complaining to said woman that the pants The Gap offers cannot possibly contain their humongous genitalia, causing their jeans to burst open at the crotch like a piñata filled with balls and foreskin.

But all pale in comparison to one repeat costumer. She has a habit of walking around the neighborhood in nothing but pantyhose and flip-flops. She comes into the store almost every day and buys almost all of the bullshit trinkets *the man* offers you for your keychain. Occasionally, she will buy a bra, but insist on wearing it out of the store. She will leave her old, dirty bra behind, most of the time stuffed in the pocket of a jacket or handbag.

One day she came into the store and declared that she *must* have a new pair of jeans. She grabs a handful of denim and makes a beeline for the dressing room. Most of the store forgets she in there after a while, until someone hears a call from the back.

"H-help me!"

It's kind of light call for help. The people working the floor don't know exactly where it's coming from.

"Someone fucking help me I'm going to be fucking sick!" she screams from the back.

They all recognize the voice and scramble to fight a trashcan. But it's too late.

"Oh my fucking god! I fucking shat! I shat because you wouldn't help me!"

They open the dressing room door and reveal her standing there completely naked, burgundy pudding coating the walls. In her hands: all of the jeans she brought into the dressing room, soaked through and through with her plea for help.

"Look what you made me do! *I fucking shat because you wouldn't fucking help me!"*

At this point a crowd starts to gather, and the manager ushers everyone out of the store. By this point, the scent of her dirty deed has escaped the confines of the dressing room. One of the employees rushes to call The Gap emergency hotline, such a thing I previously had no clue existed. The person on the other end says to go get "The Gap Bodily Fluids Clean-Up Kit." Right. Of course. So they find a box labeled such, open it up, and find the following items: a face-mask, a towel. Awesome.

Meanwhile, the rest of the employees run around the store trying to defeat the smell of a dressing room coated in soupy shit with Gap body spray. The cops have been called and the woman is pacing back and forth, still naked, in the front of the store. When she is escorted out the backdoor, she throws a tantrum. Of course, she wasn't done shopping.

This all might seem very funny to most people who have various political oppositions to the business practices of *the man* and his yuppie clothing suppliers (it is funny and there is plenty to oppose), but please to not try to smash the state by taking a shit in a dressing room. There are people trying to pay their rent who have to clean up your anarcho-loaf and their day is usually shitty enough without it.

ENDNOTES:

1) By the time you read this, the Warzone Womyn/Endless Blockade split LP will be out, but mostly gone because we'll have gone on tour and (hopefully) sold most of them. This thing is limited to about 300 copies with hand-screened covers. It might be repressed sometime in the future, but the future is mired in mystery and mysterious what-ifs, so if you want a copy, try emailing the band at warzonewomyn@gmail.com.

2) Send all other pr0n to gregory.mantooth@gmail.com

3) There is a video of Negative Tom punching Ryan Harkins (of Killed in Action fame) in the face floating around on the Internet. It might be the most genius piece of cinema of the past 20 years. A simple Google search of his name should bring it up for you.

Disgust turns to contempt when foreign occupation troops beat and kill American civilians. Finally a group of teenagers decides they've had enough. The young patriots scrounge up weapons and take to the mountains to strike back at the invaders, attacking their patrols and picking them off one at a time in a guerilla campaign designed to demoralize the enemy.

Sounds like a movie, huh? *Red Dawn* is a classic document of Reagan-era jingoism filtered through Cold War paranoia. Audiences cheered American nationalist insurgents as they blew holes through onscreen Soviet conscripts in 1984. Rent it today and you will too.

The mid-'80s were good for fictional American resistance movements. The miniseries *V*, which premiered in 1983, was followed by a 1985 sequel and eventually a full-fledged weekly TV series, focused on a cell of underground resistance fighters who bombed police stations, government offices and important infrastructure—including an oil refinery!—in the course of a long, brutal and desperate war against reptilian invaders from outer space. (The clever creatures disguise themselves in human form to get the locals to cooperate.) The series' writers kept things interesting by writing lots of moral ambiguity into their scripts. Some aliens form a "fifth column" allied with the human resistance movement while some earthlings sell out their neighbors and relatives, but none of that matters in the end. You still root for the men and women the government and official media call "terrorists."

1985 saw the widescreen release of a remake of the '50s Red Scare flick *Invasion, U.S.A.*, this time with mullet-tressed action hero Chuck Norris deploying heavy weaponry against fiendish commie saboteurs wreaking havoc in the streets of, inexplicably, south Florida.

The more stuff Chuck blows up, the

louder we applaud. After all, he ain't no terrorist—he's a freedom fighter, albeit a poorly directed one clumsily reading incredibly stupid lines.

Cheering for the underdog is as American as fatty food. In the movies we love heroes who simply want to be left alone—but are willing, like Charles Bronson in *Death Wish*, to dish out double-sized portions of blazing revenge when the baddies cross the line. Why, then, don't we pull for the Iraqi insurgents? They are, like Clint Eastwood in his '70s and '80s action flicks, fighting back against overwhelming odds. And most, like Patrick Swayze and Charlie Sheen in *Red Dawn*, are high school kids who, at first resigned to the U.S. invasion, take up arms in disgust at an increasingly abusive and hostile army of occupation. Americans play opposite roles in the two scenarios, yet we identify with Americans in both. Where the heck is our sense of empathy? Why can't we see ourselves in the faces of those kids firing RPGs at convoys of Halliburton trucks stealing Iraqi oil?

Here's the rub: Iraq's resistance fighters are breaking a lot of eggs to cook their omelet of liberation. They kill other Iraqis. They kidnap and execute foreign aid workers, truck drivers, businessmen, even diplomats and children. Americans, we tell ourselves, would never resort to that kind of terrorism—not even to free ourselves from occupation.

Wouldn't we?

Imagine America under the jackboot of, say, Icelandic occupation. At first many Americans are happy to see Bush arrested and put on trial, but it doesn't take long before we start to miss him. Promises of rapid rebuilding evaporate. Two years after saturation bombing has leveled Washington, Los Angeles, New York and other major cities, the rubble is overrun with rats and wild dogs. America's natural resources—coal, lumber, oil—are shipped back to Iceland without recompense. Unmarked checkpoints spring up everywhere, transforming a drive to the 7-11 to get water—faucets are dry—into a potentially lethal exercise. Icelandic troops conduct house raids to take away Americans' guns. Since there's no electricity for streetlights, the night belongs to gangs, who rape and hold women for ransom. There are no jobs, unless you count working for the hated police force of the puppet regime, the Unified Nordic Republic of Icelanderica. UNRI lackeys ride alongside Icelandic storm troopers to point out the homes of "terrorists," who are bagged, beaten and dragged off into the night, never to be seen again. Most of the victims are innocent civilians, of course, but the Icelandics don't speak English. They mistakenly trust their toadies, who use their authority to act on personal grudges.

These collaborators, as Karl Rove would point out, are fair game—for attacks by American resistance fighters. As in *V.* And *Red Dawn.*

A few years pass. The Icelandic government turns over nominal "sovereignty" to its puppet American regime, but nothing changes on the ground. The checkpoint shootings, mass arrests, and chaos continue unabated. Almost everyone has lost a friend or family member to the war. There's an "election," but members of the prewar Democratic and Republican parties are barred from participating. America as we know it has been rubbed out.

The humiliation is total. Icelandic forces pass out decks of cards depicting the faces of former senators, governors and generals. They shoot deposed leader George W. Bush's twin daughters and air images of their bloody, mutilated faces on state television. They print photos of Bush, haggard and obviously abused in his secret prison, wearing nothing but underwear.

Adding to the anger of patriotic Americans is the willingness of the rest of the world to forget what has happened. Other nations, including former prewar allies like Great Britain and Italy, reopen their embassies and post ambassadors to the "new America." The United Nations recognizes the collaborationist regime as legitimate and meets with its appointed leader, a man unknown in America because he spent his entire life in exile in Iceland. Carpetbaggers (the collaborationist press calls them "entrepreneurs") pour in from abroad, scheming to line their pockets by prolonging Americans' misery and poverty. Aid groups and other NGOs seeking to help hungry and homeless Americans mean well, but their presence reinforces a sense that things are back to normal—and the collaborationist media points to their presence as tacit endorsement of the occupation.

Obviously the U.S. nationalist insurgents don't want to kill civilians. They prefer that foreigners stay out of occupied America so they can focus on driving out the Icelandics, but naive and greedy intruders ignore their warning not to associate with the puppet regime. Leaders of the resistance are forced to make a brutal choice. They can kill a few diplomats here, a few aid workers there, but since executions serve no purpose as warnings unless their horror is publicized, the American patriots choose to distribute videotapes of the killings. Similarly, they warn their countrymen not to join the collaborationist police forces. But there's only one way to ensure that the jobless won't sell out their country in order to feed their families: suicide bombers who take out as many traitors as possible.

Yes, there would be an alternative to these brutal tactics. The conquered Americans could simply accept that there will never, ever again be a land of the free and home of the brave where the United States used to be. But that would hardly be a Hollywood ending.

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Current books: *Wake Up, You're Liberal! How We Can Take America Back from the Right* (Soft Skull Press, 336 pages, price $14.95), is out now, available everywhere. *Generalissimo El Busho: Essays and Cartoons on the Bush* Years (NBM Publishing, 208 pages, $19.95 hardback/$15.95 paperback) is also out. The speaking tour is over, but if you're at a high school or college with a budget for bringing in speakers, I'd be happy to come to your city.

The Fashion of Fascism

I'm talking to this guy on the phone sex line, we're making plans to get together, he wants to know if it's safe to park his truck in my neighborhood. I live in the Tenderloin, an area of San Francisco known mostly for drug addicts, trannies, old queers, hustlers, homeless people, crazy people, hookers, and immigrants—now rapidly gentrifying into a hot destination for partying hipsters, office drones, suburbanites and fashionistas. As a white kid who moved to the neighborhood at the height of dot-com real estate speculation, I'm well aware of the role I've played in this gentrification, yet this knowledge doesn't stop me from feeling helpless, hopeless, and homicidal.

But back to the phone sex line, this guy

wants to know if it's safe for him to park his truck in my neighborhood. I say what are you worried about—it's not like it's a Mercedes. He says: oh, it's much more expensive than a Mercedes—I've never bought anything so expensive, it's how I make my living and I'm worried about it getting damaged.

What kind of truck is more expensive than a Mercedes? Oh, no—it turns out the guy drives a Hummer. He says everywhere I go, people give me the finger. I say: that's because you're driving a symbol of US militarism, in the middle of a war. He says: I'm an organic farmer, a Hummer can haul a 3000-pound bag of fertilizer like nothing else—I'm building a road through a mountain.

I don't think I'm gonna hook up with this guy. Not like I haven't had sex with the enemy or anything—I mean, that's how I've made my living for the past twelve years, but it's not recreation. And what kind of organic farmer builds a road through a mountain? This is just some straight-acting faggot who wants to drive around in a tank, and he's worried that someone's gonna scratch an anarchy sign into one of his bulletproof windows.

I remember when camouflage got really trendy in the mid-nineties—club kids started sporting mini camouflage backpacks and short-shorts, and pretty soon joggers and mall rats picked up on the look. Then khakis became the dominant fashion trend, from The Gap's "Khakis Rock" campaign and Banana Republic scenes of multiracial beige bliss, to Levi's military posters and designer runway khakis in the latest new plastic fabrics. Khaki cargo pants, khaki denim skirts, khaki sarongs, khaki baseball caps, khaki raver jeans...

But that was nothing compared to now, when a quick glance will reveal an infinite number of fascinating new ways to use camouflage. How 'bout some fierce fleece baby booties in calming desert hues? A Jackson Pollack-inspired splatter paint aqua camo parka for the sensitive art student? Fuchsia camouflage overalls and matching bandanas for those cute little twins? An elegant and understated gray-and-charcoal camo-printed silk ball gown for the society doyenne? A snazzy camouflage cellphone case for the businessman on safari? And, of course—for the real man—old-school army green from head to toe—though is that a hint of burgundy for Fall 2005?

Even worse than the camouflage cabal is the trend of wearing NYPD accessories. This trend started way before the Twin Towers went down, and in the late-nineties, at the height of nationally-publicized NYPD murders of unarmed people of color I witnessed guys all over the country proudly showcasing their NYPD blue. You might as well wear a hood over your head (I mean a Klan hood, honey, not your American Apparel hoodie). I witnessed one of the worst cases of this phenomenon when a friend attempted to enter an anti-police brutality meeting here in San Francisco while wearing an SFPD baseball cap. Apparently he thought this was ironic—luckily a few of us apprehended him before entering a roomful of relatives of police murder victims.

Then there's the I ?_ New York T-shirt trend. It started just before 9-11 as the ultimate ironic electroclash fashionista statement. I remember going to some terrible Brit-pop club where some silly boy I had a crush on was deejaying, and an emaciated, pale Vidal Sassoon hairstylist fag was fully working the asymmetrical hair with bondage pants, pointy shoes, and an I ?_ New York T-shirt. But I'm sure she shelved that outdated tourist trinket as soon as suburbanites nationwide threw one on as a closet statement of unquestioning patriotism. And speaking of patriotism, no one could have missed the re-remergence of the good ol' stars-and-stripes—I'm gonna have to save that for another column.

Just the other day, I caught myself staring at some cute femme-y boy with soft eyes and wispy curls in a pastel pink T-shirt. He was wearing a camouflage baseball cap with the John Deere logo imprinted on the front—the military *and* a tractor company. What a great way to prove your masculinity! If I knew him I would have read him, but instead I just imagined him taking off the baseball cap so we could make out. He reminded me of yet another tragic boy who I had a crush on, when I lived in New York, and I went to his birthday party with two dozen roses and four guys were wearing the exact same Nikes. I said: that's enough to fund an entire sweatshop. One of them looked at my footwear selection, and said: you're wearing a whole cow on your feet. But I was prepared, I said: these boots are vegan.

But they *were* combat boots.

Mattilda, aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore is the editor, most recently, of *That's Revolting! Queer Strategies for Resisting Assimilation* (Soft Skull 2004) and the author of *Pulling Taffy* (Suspect Thoughts 2003). Contact Mattilda via <www.mattbernsteinsycamore.com> PO Box 640047 / San Francisco, CA 94164-0047.

"But you will be sitting on a pile of ruins."
–Pierre van Paasen

"We have always lived in slums and holes in the wall. We will know how to accommodate ourselves for a time. For, you must not forget, we can also build. It is we the workers who built these palaces and cities here in Spain and in America and everywhere. We, the workers, can build others to take their place. And better ones! We are not in the least afraid of ruins. We are going to inherit the earth; there is not the slightest doubt about that. The bourgeoisie might blast and ruin its own world before it leaves the stage of history. We carry a new world here, in our hearts. That world is growing this minute." –Buenaventura Durruti

Paasen's interview with Durruti during the Spanish civil war
Toronto Star, September 1936

It's a strange feeling to still write a column for *Maximum Rocknroll* after all these years when much of the punk rock scene Tim Yohannan and *MRR* were a pivotal part of in the Bay Area is in shambles. Alternative Tentacles and Jello Biafra had ownership of the Dead Kennedys' back catalog stripped from them by the other disgruntled band members in a bitter legal battle. After the loss of the Dead Kennedys' and Lookout Records' lucrative back catalog, Mordam Records made the move to Sacramento where Ruth Schwartz stanched the hemorrhaging to a slow bleed, finally to sell out to Lumberjack and partner with WEA. Larry Livermore sold Lookout Records to a couple of his workers-become-partners who promptly left Mordam for Sony/RED, and through sheer incompetence and bad taste managed to lose three quarters of the label's key bands and four-fifths of the financially crucial back catalog, including Green Day, until Lookout now teeters on the edge of bankruptcy.

Even MRR isn't what it used to be. After Tim Yo's death, there was our own costly decision to leave Mordam Records for bet-

ter distributors and greater independence that, on top of financial mismanagement and a freeloading coordinator, reduced the magazine to near destitution. The present coordinators and staff have done some serious housecleaning and financial reorganization, so MRR is once again firmly in the black, with every prospect for a long and healthy publishing future. I'm pleased in turn to continue giving you Hooligan's words o' wisdom as I shuffle through the ruins of a punk rock scene I've known since 1991, when I moved to the Bay Area and started volunteering at *MRR*.

Speaking of ruins, Democratic Party and labor union hacks are bemoaning the supposed shambles organized labor has been reduced to, what with the recent withdrawal of four powerful unions with a third of the membership from the AFL-CIO, and their creation of a rival Change to Win Coalition to push a more militant labor agenda. I for one think it's the best thing to have happened to organized labor in the last fifty years. Here's why.

Unions are labor pimps. Unions sell the labor of their members for the highest wages possible, then act to make sure their members behave and toe the line. Unions bridle and suppress not just the militancy of their rank-and-file, but also the rebelliousness of workers in general, ultimately serving to integrate the working class into capitalist society. Anybody who believes that substantive social change can come about through union activism, let alone a labor movement narrowly defined as a union movement, is severely delusional. Yet it's only when organized labor is combative, when workers are trying to organize unions and unions are fighting back against the bosses and the owners, when class conflict escalates throughout society that there exists the potential for workers to go beyond unionism. Historically in this country, those heightened periods of class struggle often occurred when the labor movement was split between moderates and radicals, when conservative union structures were challenged by more radical union movements.

The American Federation of Labor, the first half of the AFL-CIO acronym, was in many ways a more radical labor organization than the ungainly, cooperative-based Knights of Labor with which it was briefly coterminous. In turn the AFL experienced three distinct periods when it had to contend with much more radical, even revolutionary labor activity. The first was at its inception, when in the 1880s and '90s the moderate AFL fought for the eight-hour day alongside revolutionary socialists and anarchists like those lynched by the state for the 1886 Haymarket bombing. The second occurred when the Industrial Workers of the World challenged the AFL's business unionism with sabotage and direct action tactics between 1905 and 1919. In these instances, state and capitalist repression brutally smashed the radicals, leaving the conservative AFL the only man standing. The AFL was moved to the left, however. Of more importance, the working class went substantially beyond unionism, most dramatically during the post-war mass strikes of 1919-20 when a genuine workers' soviet emerged out of the Seattle general strike.

The third instance came during the Great Depression, with the founding of the Committee for Industrial Organization within the AFL. When ten CIO unions were expelled from the AFL for Communist influence to form the Congress of Industrial Organizations, the resulting rivalry spurred on mass working class activity and organization. This was a period of unprecedented labor radicalism, from the wave of general strikes in San Francisco, Minneapolis and Toledo in 1934 through the Flint, Michigan sit-down strike in 1936, to the outbreak of wildcat strikes across the nation during the second World War. The sweeping post-war strike wave involved four and a half million workers and culminated in such actions as the Oakland general strike of 1946 when again workers went beyond unionism. Not only was the AFL moved substantially to the left, but both the AFL and the CIO were unable to keep up with the radicalism of their workers. Today we are the beneficiaries of Social Security, unemployment insurance, a forty-hour work week, and the health and safety regulations that this period of labor activism brought about.

The inevitable state and capitalist repression intended to de-radicalize, slow down and domesticate the labor movement after the second World War had help from the unions themselves this time around. The CIO expelled eleven "Communist dominated" unions, and both the AFL and CIO systematically purged their respective leaderships and memberships of Reds. With their merger in 1955, the AFL-CIO sought to lay claim to the working class radicalism of the 1930s and '40s *sans* its revolutionary content.

With any luck, the current split-off of unions from the AFL-CIO to pursue a more militant labor agenda will result in an upsurge of radical working class organization and activity generally. In turn, this rise in labor militancy will not only help counter the propensity for unions to act as labor brokers and disciplinarians, but also open up the possibility for workers to go beyond unionism altogether. Barbara Ehrenreich provides an excellent list of suggestions for how unions might go about becoming "lean, mean, and scrappy" once again in her essay "Tiny Labor" (*The Progressive*, August 2005) for those willing to put their faith in labor unions and union organizing. I prefer to place my hopes with workers going beyond unionism in any intensification of the class struggle that might result from the AFL-CIO split. Like Durruti, we must not be afraid of ruins.

Damn, yet another diversionary column. Will I ever get to the critique of Marxism and the Left I've been promising? Have patience. In the meantime, here's a reprint of Barbara Ehrenreich's column.

"Lefty" Hooligan

Tiny Labor
by Barbara Ehrenreich; *The Progressive*; July 27, 2005

In the fifty years of the AFL-CIO's existence, Big Labor has shrunk to a third of its former size, but it's been clinging to its outsized clothes and outmoded habits. While membership dwindles, the AFL-CIO has continued to act like a big shot - doling out tens of millions to the Democratic Party and occupying a palatial spread located within kiss-blowing distance of the White House.

Nor has it budged from the style of "business unionism" developed by Samuel Gompers in the early twentieth century, in which unions act much like big insurance companies, offering their "consumers" the prospect of better wages and job security. It's Tiny Labor today, and - split or not - the challenge is to make it also lean, mean, and scrappy as a starving terrier.

Herewith a few suggestions, culled from discussions with labor lawyer Tom Geoghegan and dozens of other labor activists around the country:

Organize, don't subsidize. The amount spent on organizing is one of the key issues separating Change to Win from the rest of the AFL-CIO. Stern and the other dissidents want to boost the federation's organizing to $72 million; Sweeney would increase it to $30 million out of a total budget of $125 million. Where does the rest of that money go now? Well, a lot goes to subsidize the Democratic Party, with a

view to electing more labor-friendly candidates. But the best way to pump up the Democratic vote is, in fact, to organize. According to the AFL-CIO's own statistics, nonunion white male voters went 69 percent for Bush in 2000, while white male union members went 59 percent for Gore. Put another way, union organizing adds more Democratic votes, at least among white males, than any number of television commercials. The best way to get union-friendly elected officials is to build the unions.

Open up membership to every pro-union American. If I want to support the women's movement, all I have to do is send in my dues to NOW. But to join a union, most people have to go through the trial-by-fire of a union organizing drive in their workplace. This isn't so in Germany, for example, where individuals can join a union whether their workplace is organized or not. Here, the Steelworkers have started opening up their union to unorganized individuals, but for most Americans the unions remain a distant, inaccessible fortress. Individual members wouldn't be just dues- payers and supporters; they could be the seeds of organizing drives in their workplaces.

Advance the class, not just the membership. More than once, union organizers have told me that goals like universal health insurance are irrelevant because the union can win health insurance for its members, or at least those who survive the organizing drive. Maybe 1940s-style Big Labor could reasonably hope to improve life for the working class entirely by organizing, but today's Tiny Labor has to take on class-wide issues now - or risk being the "special interest group" the right always claims it is. The unions should be spearheading the drive for universal health care, subsidized housing, and child care, adequate unemployment insurance, and all the other public benefits that would make low-wage workers' lives more sustainable. At the local level, this might mean sending organizers into low-income neighborhoods to help people deal with TANF (the replacement for welfare) or the public housing authorities - just as, for example, the Swedish unions do.

Fight for workers' democratic rights, and not just the right to organize. In complete disregard for international human rights standards, American employers have deprived workers of the right to organize, chiefly by intimidating and firing union activists. The AFL-CIO has responded with its "Voice at Work" program, which emphasizes community support for the right to organize. But that's not the only right missing in the workplace, where workers have no freedom of speech or assembly, no privacy rights, and no right to any kind of due process before being fired. Without these other rights, organizing is almost impossible. Besides, it seems a little self-interested for the unions to focus on the one right (to organize) that brings them dues. We need a new civil rights movement for all workers, and the unions should be leading it.

Start seeing labor as a movement, not just an institution. In the business-union model developed by Gompers, workers are treated as consumers of union-won benefits. Maybe this made sense for Big Labor, which had more to offer in exchange for the risks of an organizing drive, but Tiny Labor has to start treating each worker as a potential activist and leader in a grassroots movement against corporate power. This means it has to be evangelical enough to inspire people who've been down all their lives to stop cowering and stand up. How? Well, sometimes labor seems to forget its own secret weapon - the uplifting force the corporate guys don't know about and can't even imagine - and that is solidarity. Tell people that the point isn't just to gain a few bucks, important as that is, but to unite with other workers in the struggle for a better world, here and abroad, for themselves and their grandchildren. A surprising number of people will leap at the opportunity to be part of a world-changing, history-making venture, whatever the risks are.

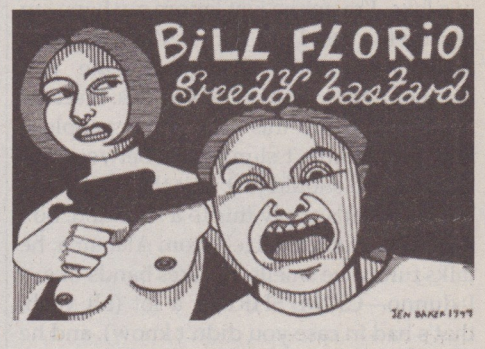
Lose those buildings. Big Labor might have been able to afford them, but it's unseemly for Tiny Labor to be sitting on hundreds of millions of dollars worth of elegant real estate in D.C., and I mean the Teamsters' building as well as the AFL-CIO headquarters. Sell off the buildings right now, at the height of the real estate bubble, and fan out into storefronts and church basements around the country.

And what's this with holding this summer's AFL-CIO convention in a hotel that charges at least $186 a night? Ever heard of Motel 6?

[Barbara Ehrenreich is a columnist for *The Progressive*, and the author of *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting By in America* and *Blood Rites: Origins and History of the Passions of War*. This piece is excerpted from a slightly longer essay.]

Date to print: 8/15/05

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligan3@mindspring.com.



This is gonna be one of those columns that I don't have a clear plan for, but bear with me, it'll be good anyhow. Well, maybe. I seem to run into a lot of people who have odd age limits on things. Say, 22 is too old to have a Mohawk, or 19 is too young to date someone who's 32. People around me say things like, "I'm 30 and I have no money in the bank, what's wrong with me?" Pardon me, but I chose to hang out with people like you and listen to music like this and do all this fun stuff to avoid hearing things like that. If I wanted to, I could hang out with my sister and hear about how her biological clock is ticking and her friends are boring.

The one thing I've learned about happiness and contentment in life is that if you're going to get hung up on unimportant details that society is trying to impose on you, you will always be miserable. I mean, some people spend a whole lot of time meditating and doing yoga and all these sorts of mind exercises to try and divert their attention from these hang-ups. But, really, most of the things we agonize over in our daily lives—things we choose to gossip about, reasons we decide to hold grudges and whatnot—aren't a big deal if you wanted to really think it out. Then again, maybe this is why I'm totally dumbfounded when people get upset about things I write in my column.

OK, here's a hang-up I have. I don't like walking on lake bottoms. It's mud, and things live in the mud. Slimy things, and I feel I'm going to step on them. Of course it's pretty rare that I do, but that's what makes it a hang-up. Actually, the more I think about it, the more I keep thinking I just stepped on some slimy thing. If it were a real fear, I'd go in with my shoes on or

something, but no, I just sit there complaining about it, then I end up not having any fun because I'm worrying about what's under my feet rather than swimming and splashing and holding people underwater. Now, I can look at myself and call myself an idiot for feeling this way and chances are, if there's a good time to be had in a lake, I'm gonna just ignore my hang-up and do the best I can with it. I'm not gonna spoil everyone else's good time just because I got a case of the yuckies. It seems some people do this with other people—hey, people aren't slimy mud between yer toes, so you should just quit that shit.

OK, so let's apply this to a situation. So I meet this guy, Cliff. He's from Alabama, he talks funny, he smells, he likes bands like—I dunno—CRIMPSHRINE a lot (oh yeah, that's bad in case you didn't know), and he goes on for hours about hating cops for no real reason. Now, being a pretty judgmental person, in the far recesses of my mind I've written this dude off as a nincompoop. But, being that it's also me, I try to be as polite as possible (of course, this assumes a sense of humor). After running into this dude four or five times, I realized that he doesn't have much in common with me in tastes or in basic life ideologies. After talking to him, though, we realized we have a lot of mutual friends in parts of the deep south and the West Coast, we'd actually been to some of the same shows and parties years before and didn't know each other, and the guy has some awesome stories to tell and likes mine as well and is a genuine human being. When I think about this, it makes me feel good that I have something within myself to overcome whatever stereotypes I like to put on people and whatever people think they can expect out of me. I can tell you for sure, it's still a work in progress.

The thing is, when I get put on the opposite side of the table, say I'm in Alabama, or say, Westchester County, New York. It seems to hit me that much harder when I'm not allowed to get to the point of figuring out how much someone does or doesn't suck. For instance, I've been made to feel awkward for being over 20, over 30, under 30, heterosexual, non-vegan, wearing shorts, wearing a T-Shirt, shaving my head, not shaving my head, not having tattoos, owning a car, not bringing my van, not liking ska, liking the big ole butt video, not enjoying strip clubs, not eating beets, making people eat at Cracker Barrel, etc etc. Now, none of these things really matter. Yeah yeah, you can think they matter, but really as far as me being a fellow human being executing zero malice towards you personally, they really don't. I'm not talking about you trusting me to buy toothpaste for you or date your sister. I'm talking about the level of acceptance of other human beings that pretty much are on the same side as you if you wanna take it that far.

Anyhow I started off with the age thing, so that's the hang up of choice I'll end with. I've met fifteen-year olds who do really hilarious zines and hung out with their moms and dads after befriending 'em. I know people over 50 that do punk rock radio shows that can play 30 songs I like in a row. It's stupid to thing of people in terms of appearance, (tho' there can be an argument for odor I think) Shirley Muldowney drag raced professionally until she was 62. That's older than Mick Jagger. A better example, Jerry Lee Lewis is over 70 and he's still good to see live, so is James Brown. Hell, I'd hang with em, they seem like more fun than most of you.

Over 'n' Out Goody Buddies. Write me sometime at bill@candids.com

This month I want to revisit two column penned by Bob Suren just over ten years ago. Bob is one of the most stand up guys in DIY hardcore, he's been running Sound Idea record store in Florida for over ten years and doing a label and shows for longer than that. Bob wrote these columns at a time when hardcore/punk was exploding after some slow and dismal times in the late 80s and early 90s. If you've followed my column over the last few years, I've alluded to these columns and expounded upon the points made therein numerous times. But now, lets let Bob have the floor....

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I have the floor!

Turd Bands—*stay home!*

By Bob Suren

(Originally appeared in *Heavy Rotation* Fanzine, 1995)

Never fails. Every summer some kid from Idaho who sings for some band that I've never heard of calls me in the middle of the night and asks if there's any place to play in my area. Well, yeah. There are lots of places.

Never fails. In fact this happens so often that I keep a list of contacts on my computer and I update the list as needed. I almost always try to be as helpful as possible because booking a tour is hard work. And that's only half of it. Then there's the actual tour. Bad shows, no money, no gas, broken vehicles. Shows fall through. People flake out. It is tough to do a good tour. Do you want to know why? Because there are so many goddamn turd bands out there.

Every summer, scores of bands that shouldn't even be playing local shows get the cottin-pickin' notion that they should jump into dad's work van and drive around the country. All of the turd bands on the road are taking shows from good bands. Bands that have been around for a few years and have a few releases to their credit deserve to tour. In fact, they should tour to promote their band.

But, the good bands are finding it harder and harder to get shows because Larry Cowfuck from Wisconsin is on the road with the band he put together in his parents' garage two months ago.

"Hey," says Larry, "we have a record out, actually it's a tape. We recorded it ourselves a month ago in my parent's garage." Maybe Larry Cowfuck's band (let's call them the Floating Doo Doo Balls) does have a record. They put it out themselves a month ago. Guess where it was recorded?

From the perspective of good, established bands, the Floating Doo Doo Balls are an obstacle. The Floating Doo Doo Balls cheat them out of some good shows. They have to split the gas money with the Floating Doo Doo Balls. They have to sit through the Floating Doo Doo Balls hour long set. They have to lend the Floating Doo Doo Balls and bass amp and drum sticks. The Floating Doo Doo Balls must be killed.

Now, let's take it from the fans perspective. He goes to a show and pays $5 to get in. The guy at the door says, "It's five bucks because there are three out-of-town bands." OK, he can see that. But what if the three out-of-town bands are the Floating Doo Doo Balls and two equally terrible bands? The fan feels like wasted his money. Maybe he even had to stand outside because the Floating Doo Doo Balls sucked so fucking much. You laugh, but it happens. I've seen touring bands in my town that shouldn't have left dad's garage. I completely support the DIY ethic, but before you start booking that cool summer

tour, ask yourself, "Does anyone give a fuck about us?"

I have the floor!

"The Death of the Demo Tape and the Birth of the Shitty 7-inch"

By Bob Suren

(Originally appeared in *Heavy Rotation* Fanzine, 1994)

Although I have never been much of a collector of demo tapes, the things do have a valid place in underground music. The demo tape should serve as practice for a band's first vinyl or CD release. However, the very nature of the demo tape is what nearly has wiped it out all together. In the early days of punk rock, demo collectors were fanatical. Now, It seems demo collectors only exist in remote locations in Asia and South America, where vinyl and CDs are hard to come by. Eventually, nobody took demo tapes very seriously because—well, anybody could put one out. Bands began putting out tapes of their first practice, recorded in a garage on a portable stereo. It was cool that is could happen, but it wasn't cool that it actually did. A lot of seriously shitty demo tapes have come my way, and I don't actively seek them out. The demo tape lost credibility. *Maximumrocknroll* refused to review demo tapes any more then they repealed the decision. Then *MRR* repealed the repeal! They just got burned out on hearing one awful recording after another.

Now, the 7" record is facing the same dilemma. It's getting too easy for bands to put out records. Bands that aren't ready to record, bands that have never played a show, are putting out 7" records. Why? Because the demo tape became a joke. To be taken seriously, a band has to conquer vinyl. Now, instead of a flood of crappy demo tapes, there's a flood of crappy 7"s. Sure, they're DIY, but if they suck, what's the point? The band will give some to their friends, sell a few through the mail and be stuck with hundreds of copies, without a clue as to how to distribute them. There used to be a time when if a band had a record out (especially if someone else put it out) one could be reasonably sure that the record in question did not indeed suck the big one. Now, that test does not exist. Any fool with $500 can put out a record of any old crap. Again, the fact this is possible is cool. *The fact that it actually happens is not.*

What does the future hold? I'll tell you Soon record buyers and labels will be burnt out on crappy 7"s and resort to putting out crappy CDs. It's actually not that big of a jump and it is already starting to happen. CDs look a lot more "professional" than a 7" And, I must admit when I see and independent produced CD I am pretty impressed. But, brass tacks is, if you've got the money, you can do anything you want. However, maybe the higher costs of releasing a CD will make a few bands and labels re-think the idea before they go for it.

The bottom line is, a band should ask. "Is this stuff good enough to be released?" It would be more prudent to just listen too and learn from those early recordings. A band should take its time. It should go into the studio and do it right before blowing a wad of cash on a release that no on is going to care about.

I hope the demo tape makes a comeback. The good demo tape, that is, and there have been hundreds. Band shouldn't be afraid of putting out demos. If the music is good, it will stand on it's own. And, I hope the bands and labels exercise some restraint in putting out 7"s. There are thousands of records the world can live without. Hey, I've been responsible for a few. I really don't care what medium a band chooses for its releases, as long as some time and thought went into it. And personally, I'd rather see a demo tape of a band in it's infancy than a glossy, shrink-wrapped CD of a band in it's infancy.

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As we can see, Bob's breathless report from the front lines also turned out to be remarkably prescient. In the years that followed these columns there has been an explosion of bands, records, CDs, tours, and shows. As Bob feared, the shitty CD has replaced the shitty 7", which had displaced the shitty demo tape. And Turd Bands can just be replaced with "Myspace Bands" and multiplied by one thousand to get today's booking scene. Furthermore, the signal to noise ratio continues diminish. It used to be bands strove to put out records that were "all killer, no filler"—nowadays I see mostly "all sleeper, no keeper" releases. I think the world of DIY hardcore would be a lot better off if a vast number of ill conceived bands broke up, labels folded, and distributors went under. A frequent complaint I hear from labels and distros is that bootlegs and reissues outsell all the current releases. On one hand, the volume of stuff coming out today is so large, that hard earned money tends to go to bands that are known rippers. But on the other hand, maybe a lot of today's hardcore just....lacks? Maybe the fire has gone out in many of these bands. Maybe there was no fire to begin with. Just going through the motions of putting out a 7" and touring as some sort of rite de passage between college and a career.

I have visited and re-visited these points in this column, and I can see one plausible direction this could be heading. Implosion. That is to say, the DIY hardcore scene is crushed under it's own weight. Bands come home from unsuccessful tours and break up. Labels with thousands of unsold records just pack it in. Distributors who don't get any orders go under. While I hate to see good people who are making an effort give up in disgust and frustration, I'm also kind of glad to see peddlers of low quality schlock punished by their own arrogance and poor taste. I think there will be time of chaos and perhaps what economists call a "correction" I hope that people making and releasing music will start to slow down put more thought into what they are doing and release more records that can stand on their own. *All killer. no filler.*

It's been a bit of a slow month around these here parts, for me at least. Not being gainfully employed in the slightest since my return from warmer southern climes, I've spent the fog-cloaked days of the typical San Francisco summer in such necessary pursuits as catching up on John Carpenter's back catalog and borrowing KRAFTWERK CDs from the library. And unless you'd like a thousand-word treatise on my surprise at how much I like these seminal Kraut-bots, I've got relatively few releases to comment on this month. Nonetheless, there're still a few items worthy of mention.

To start with, we have the very welcome return of Gainesville's finest, ASSHOLE PARADE, with their *Say Goodbye* 7"—on, of course, No Idea. Though previously unreleased, the material on this well-stacked 14-track EP is from the earliest incarnation of the band, being newly mixed and completed songs that were originally recorded in '97 and '98. Most songs were new to my ears, though you do get early versions of classic A-HOLE songs like "Sample" and "Soldier" plus a CIRCLE JERKS cover ("Red Tape", on which Rob from ASSÜCK, who recorded the tracks, plays harmonica)

and a cover of related-member band, ANSOJUAN. It goes without saying—this stuff is great, and I couldn't be happier that the ASSHOLEs are active again. Though apparently not officially reforming, they are playing the odd big show or two these days (or at least trying to, anyway, having been foiled by the local constabulary at the massive SoCal Fest last month, from which I've heard mixed reports), and are supposedly getting their shit in order to record a new full-length by year's end. Let's hope it sees the light of day, but until then, "Say Goodbye" should more than tide you over (www.noidearecords.com).

Next up, I think I'll say a word or two about another fine label that's popped up in the last year or two from the ever-fertile Northern California scene, and that would be the media conglomerate known as Tankcrimes Records. The head Tank Criminal has previously funded releases from some of the more active, visible, and audible members of the current Bay Area hardcore/thrash scene, including STFU, STRUNG UP, SCURVY DOGS, FUNERAL SHOCK, and DEADFALL. Now venturing off on his first foray into the realms of death metal and grindcore, Scotty Karate has unleashed the first proper release from the mighty POPULATION REDUCTION.

I've already lavished much praise upon these Ohio-transplanted self-proclaimed "hash smoking grind freaks" in these pages and this 7" merely serves as further justification for such obsequiousness. Recorded right around the same time as their *Each Birth a New Disaster* full-length (which is as yet still unreleased while they shop it to labels), the superbly named "At the Throats of Man Forever" contains seven tracks of their flawlessly executed brand of death/grind, comparable to ENGORGED, HEMDALE, maybe MACABRE, and ABSCESS, whom they cover here with "I Don't Give a Fuck." The packaging is really top-notch too, obviously costing several blood bank visits' worth of income to cover the patch, stickers, and toxic waste-splattered vinyl. As usual, can't recommend this enough, and be sure to keep an eye out for the full-length, whenever it's released (www.karaterex.com/tankcrimes, www.populationreduction.net).

Heading down I-5 for a Southern California update in the post-SoCal Fest aftermath (which, I guess I should keep my mouth shut about since I wasn't there—someone should submit a full show review), Burbank, California's long-standing home of grind/hardcore, Deep Six Records, has several new additions to their long line of excellent releases. First up, there's the new LACK OF INTEREST LP, *Take Another Step*, the first release in, uh, a really long time from these veteran punks. With cover art that's oddly reminiscent of KING CRIMSON's in-no-way-related *In the Court of the Crimson King* album, "Take Another Step" puts LACK OF INTEREST right back on top of the power violence heap with 19 tracks of classic furious hardcore. I actually don't recall L.O.I. being as, dare I say, "technical" as they are here, with each song having a dizzying amount of tempo shifts, stops and starts, and the usual expected speed and venomous vocals. Really good to hear from these guys again.

Also on Deep Six, from a completely non-hardcore, 100 percent metal about-face comes a 7" from a new band comprised of ex-members of THE LOCUST and CATTLE DECAPITATION—San Diego's PARASITIC. Continuing along the ever-heavier progression from THE LOCUST to CATTLE DECAP, PARASITIC is even more strictly metal death metal, of the old school American brutal SUFFOCATION variety. I'm not sure this is my favorite brand of death metal, and something about this guy's drumming continues to bug me, as it has in his previous outfits—just a bit too plodding on the rather un-fast blast beats—but still, death metal 45s are cool, and the music is pretty effectively brutal, with some good brutal breakdowns and brutal riffs and brutal vocals. What can I say? It's brutal.

Speaking of CATTLE DECAPITATION, Deep Six also recently released the vinyl version of their latest full length, *Humanure*, in addition to the LP version of PHOBIA's exquisite *Get Up and Kill*, both of which are well worth a second visit if you missed 'em the first time. There's also a new 7" from VOETSEK, but I haven't had a chance to hear it yet. In any event, point yourself to www.deepsixrecords.com and lend the good man some web design skills if you've got 'em.

While I'm on the ever-beloved MRR topic of death metal, it would be pretty irresponsible of me not to mention the new release from arguably the best death metal band of the last ten years, *Annihilation of the Wicked*, from the incomparable NILE. I know the majority of *MRR*'s readership wouldn't go near anything metal if their life depended on it, but for anyone willing to bridge the metal divide, the speed, intensity, complexity, and sheer power of this band is undeniable. Even now, after a solid month or so of listening, there's still much in the dense maelstrom of riffing I've yet to make out. With some songs approaching the ten-minute mark, the mind reels at the endurance needed to play these compositions.

As usual, main guitarist and Egyptophile Karl Sanders provides extensive liner notes for each song, detailing the historical origins of the lyrical topics, all of which are in keeping with the theme of the band throughout its career—the world of ancient Egypt. It's kinda like how you used to be able to learn about Alexander the Great and The Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner from IRON MAIDEN. *Annihilation* also features yet another new drummer, George Kollias, formerly of numerous Greek black and death bands I'd never heard of. He's of course better than 99 percent of the drummers out there, but unfortunately, the guy who preceded him, Tony Laureano (of ANGEL CORPSE, MALEVOLENT CREATION, and countless others) was in that one percent, and frankly, the new guy pales in comparison. All in all, though definitely not as strong as *In Their Darkened Shrines*, which I easily consider their finest work, *Annihilation* is another masterpiece from death metal's finest that truly pushes the envelope of human playing ability.

And now it's time to speak of the strange case of ALIENATION MENTAL. It's more than possible that I'm just slow on the uptake, but until about six months ago I'd never even heard of this band hailing from the Czech Republic. I laughed at the thought of my pal Andee giving me a copy of any grind band I hadn't at least heard of that would be any good. But upon playing the album—the dubiously titled *Ball Spouter* (Khaaranus Productions)—I was immediately humbled, and utterly blown away. For those interested in inhuman death/grind drumming, as anyone paying even a little attention to this column should know me to be, this band is second to none. The guy makes Flo from CRYPTOPSY sound like a complete pussy, doing that crazy faster-than-a-blast-beat ultra-blast on a ridiculously reverberating piccolo snare all over the place. The rest of the band members are no slouches either, and the album quickly became a favorite, to be played for anyone who came near.

Unfortunately, *Ball Spouter* was released in 2002. Fast-forward three years to right around the time I found out about them, frantically searching for current information on them online. Imagine my delight at

finding the imminent release of a new album, *Psychopathicolorspectrum*. Imagine my dismay on reading and hearing about the new (or should I say "nu") direction of the music contained therein, possibly the all-time worst idea for music ever: nu-metal grindcore. It sounds like a bad joke, but it's not. It still boggles my mind that a band could be so savvy as to what makes killer extreme music, and yet have no hint as to what makes nu-metal the most repellent strain of musical garbage. I've only heard the mp3s on their site of the new material, which are just one-minute clips, but any longer than that of the singer's Jonathan Davis-"inspired" pinching-one-out breathy angst-y whisper/shouts would be more than I could stand. Oh well, chalk it up to cross-cultural "lost in translation;" it's at least worth checking their site to hear how bad it is and to see such choice updates in their news section as: "There are some new angry and bad reviews to our new CD. Is it possible that so many people hate our new stuff?" And while you're there, definitely pick up a copy of *Ball Spouter*. Sad though their outcome may be, at least they had one brilliant album, which, you know, most can't rightfully claim (http://alienation-mental.wz.cz).

That's about it for this month. I'd also recommend checking out the new ENDLESS BLOCKADE CD, *Turn Illness into a Weapon*, on Sound Pollution, and *Singers Ruin Perfectly Good Bands* from SEAN, a drum & keyboard duo from Seattle the quality of whose music is inversely proportional to the quality of their name. Both of these get better, longer reviews in this month's reviews section, so flip to the back for that. Also, the FUCK THE FACTS CD, *Mullet Fever*, which was easily my favorite album reviewed last month, is definitely standing the month-long test of time in my CD player, so there's another recommendation. Other than that, I'll be scouring the used bins for the new OBITUARY CD—it's nice to see them back, but I'm still not sure I can bring myself to pay full price for reunion metal.

Oh yeah, one last important thing: I moved. Three doors down. From now on, please send anything to review to: Elliott Lange, 1320 Fulton St, San Francisco, CA 94117. E-mail's the same: cromlaughs@hotmail.com.

Till next time… —EL

"The road of life is never paved, it's full of wrong turns and mistakes we've made."
—A Hymn for the Cowards, Libertines and Scoundrels," COLBOM

"Oh my God," says My Future Ex-Wife, a few years back, as I stumble in the door around four in the morning, "did you get into a fight?"

I look at her like she's nuts, while P.J., my Yorkshire Terrier starts barking at me.

"What are you talking about?" I say, through my pounding headache.

"Your nose, it's all swollen," she explains.

I make my way to the bathroom, with each step taking its toll on my head.

"Who hit you?" asks My Future Ex-Wife, close behind me.

I look in the mirror, and see that my nose is in fact swollen. Like a boxer's.

"Ummm," I stammer.

"What happened?" demands My Future Ex-Wife. P.J. barks, also interested in an answer.

"It happened in the E.R." I say. My head pounds worse, as I see the skin under my eyes start to blacken.

"The E.R.?" yells My Future Ex-Wife, "As in emergency room? What were you doing in an E.R.?"

"I went there with Wayne, Bob, and Andy," I try to explain. Wayne's a friend who lives in our building. Andy's my lawyer. And Bob owns a punk club in upstate New York. In Goshen. On the Florida border.

"But I thought you were visiting Bob at his club," explains My Future Ex-Wife. "So how did you end up in the E.R.? Did you get in a car wreck?"

"No," I say.

"Then how'd you get the fat nose?" she asks. "And by the way, I think it may be broken."

"It was The Arden Hill E.R.," I say, trying to play the whole thing down.

"I didn't ask what E.R. it was," My Future Ex-Wife is now screaming, "I asked how you ended up there. And how your nose got swollen and probably broken."

"From the lap dance," I finally confessed, knowing it's always better to tell the truth.

"What lap dance?" screams My Future Ex-Wife. P.J. barks in the form of a question, also.

"The one I got in The Arden Hill E.R.," I explain.

"You got a lap dance in an emergency room?" asks My Future Ex-Wife.

"It was in the M.R.I. registration area, actually," I say, trying to be clear.

"You better tell me what you are taking about right now," says My Future Ex-Wife, with her hands on her hips.

I knew then that I better tell her the whole story. I just didn't know if she'd believe it.

***

"Bob," I say to my friend who owns a punk club in upstate New York, a few months earlier, "you can't make money with punk rock. No way, no how."

"But what about Hilly Kristal?" asks Bob, referring to the owner of CBGB.

"He was in the right place at the right time," I explain, "and besides, you are in Goshen, New York. On the border of Florida, New York. What the fuck is up there?"

"Lots of cows," Bob replies.

"Look," I say to Bob, who I've known since I was a kid because he is the first cousin of my old pal, Seth Death, who used to be in a band with me, "why not just open a strip club again like you used to have? You made money that way, didn't you?"

Bob explains that he's tired of the whole stripping thing. That he used to edit a major porno magazine, still has a stripper magazine, and is just plain tired of boobs and vaginas.

"I can understand that," I lie, "but still, punk?"

"There are lots of kids up here," he says, "and they all like punk rock. In fact, they all would like it if I booked Furious George into the club I just purchased."

I tell him I will gladly play his club, but not to expect making any money.

And it turns out I was right. A few weeks later we played at his place, Joe's Bar, and the few people who showed up hated us because they thought we were sell-out rock stars. I think it may have been because we had all finished school past the tenth grade.

Later that night, I asked Bob, as he was paying us with all his profits, why the place was called "Joe's" and not "Bob's."

"Those neon signs are expensive," he replies, pointing at the bright red neon "Joe's Bar" sign, "and the fuck if I'm gonna buy another one."

So two and a half months later I find myself on the phone with Bob.

"George," he says, "I'm taking your advice and starting up the stripping again."

"The high school kids aren't paying your bills?" I ask, rubbing it in.

"Shut up," he replies. "I'm gonna have mud wrestling. Wanna come up?"

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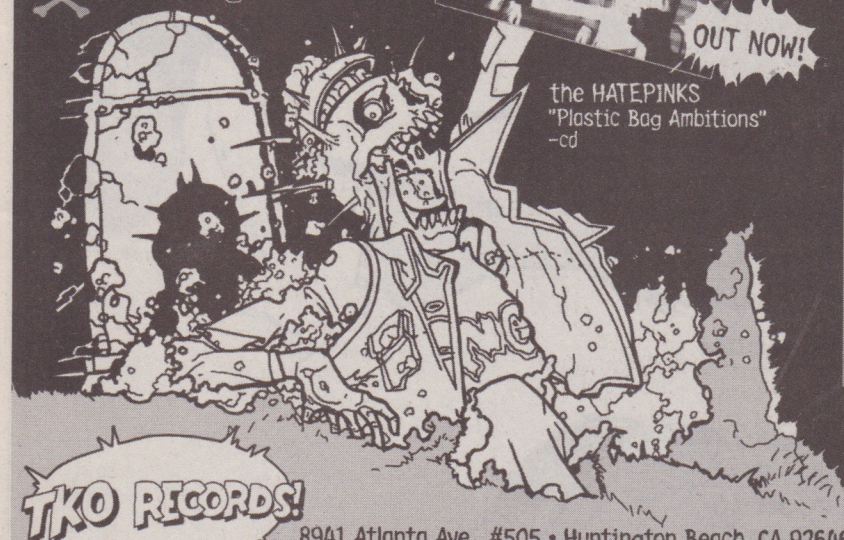

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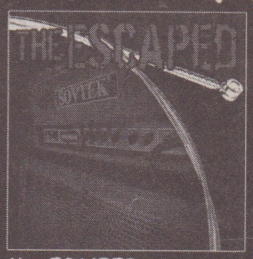

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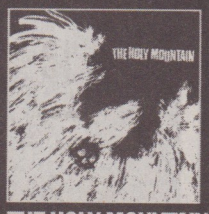

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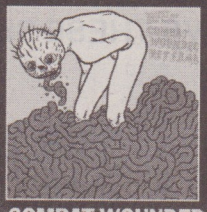

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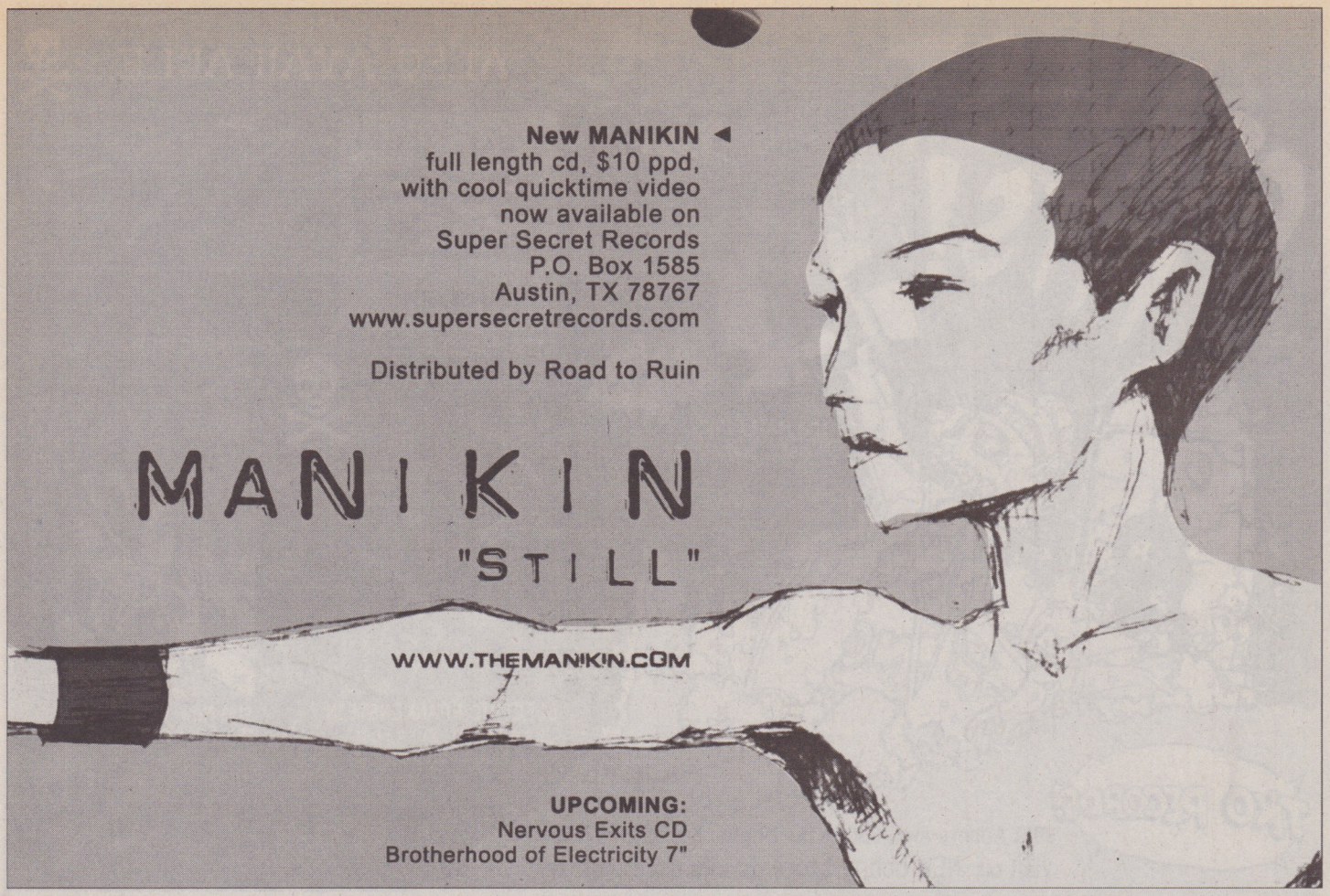

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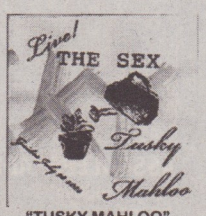

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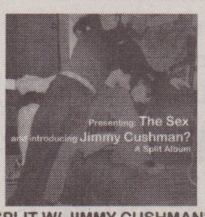

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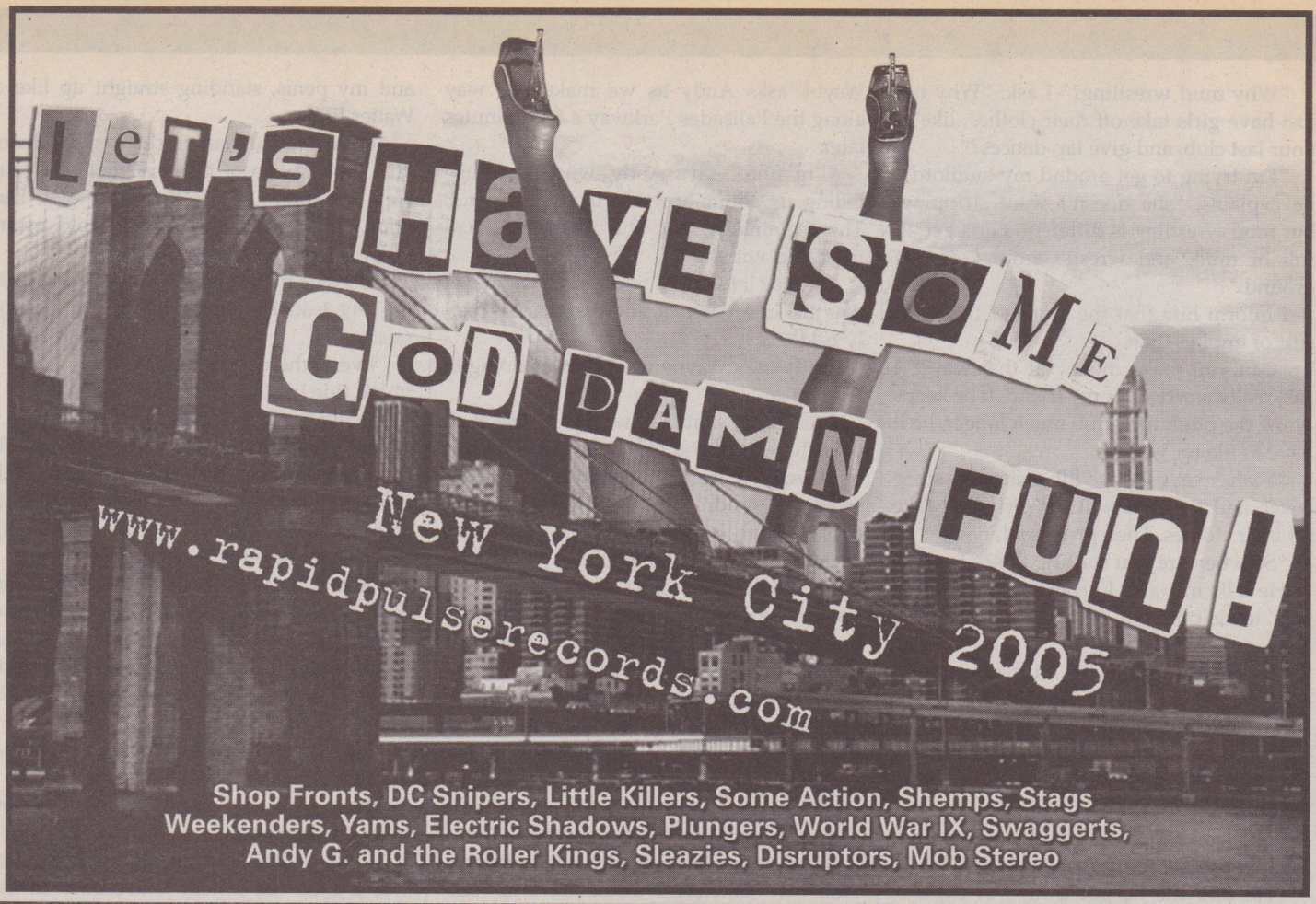

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"Why mud wrestling?" I ask. "Why not just have girls take off their clothes, like at your last club, and give lap dances?"

"I'm trying to get around my landlord," he explains, "she doesn't want stripping, but mud wrestling is different. Girls get all full of mud, and wrestle around on the ground."

I inform him that the name of the sport sort of implies that.

"Can you make money at that way?" I ask, really worried for my friend. If he keeps doing the punk rock club much longer, he'll have to file for welfare.

"Yeah," says Bob, "I'll charge a steep cover, and the girls will get dirty and take off their clothes. Then give lap dances."

"So when are you starting this?" I ask.

He tells me, and I arrange a little "field trip" to visit Bob.

***

"So there's gonna be mud wrestling?" asks Wayne, as we get into the van he is "borrowing" from work.

"Actually," I say, "I talked to Bob a few hours ago. He says now it's gonna be hot oil wrestling."

"He has a whole ring and stuff set up?" asks Wayne, as he starts the vehicle.

"He told me he got a mat," I explain, "like for tumbling."

As we make our way uptown to pick up my lawyer, Andy, who is to join us on this excursion, I ask Wayne about the van.

"I use it for work and stuff," he explains.

"But I thought you were a teacher and worked with kids and all," I say.

"I am," explains Wayne, "this van is what I use to transport the kids around town. For different events. For field trips."

We pick up Andy, who continues this line of questioning.

"So," says Andy in his NBC cap that reads "The More You Know," "this van is for a Youth Organization?"

"Something like that," Wayne explains, "only if you haven't noticed, there aren't many handles or locks on the inside of this thing. It was recently stolen. Then returned. The dashboard was missing, also."

I suddenly feel a cold breeze from the front seat and tell Wayne.

"Oh," he says, "the door is probably open. Just push it open and pull it shut. It does that sometimes."

So, at fifty miles an hour, along the West side Highway, I push the door with a tiny bit of force and it flings open. I reach out, grab it, and pull it shut. Tightly. I'm glad I'd asked. I could have ended up road kill.

"Are you warm enough back there?" Wayne asks Andy as we make our way along the Palisades Parkway a few minutes later.

"I'm fine," says Andy, who was busy telling us about how his latest girlfriend, The Dominican, not The Australian, had moved in with him.

"'Cause let me tell you," says Wayne, "I was just in Antarctica, and that place is really cold!"

Andy asks Wayne what he was doing in Antarctica.

I tell Andy that Wayne likes to travel all over the world, and that before that, he was in Argentina for three months, where he swears he didn't get laid very much. I explain that I find that hard to believe because it seems to me that every time I see Wayne he's got a new chick. I hear it's because he's very charming, and hung like a horse. My friend Eddie says it's because Wayne can lick his eyebrows.

"We went there on a Russian boat," explains Wayne, as to how he got to Antarctica. "It was the cheapest and neatest way to go."

"What does a good Jew like you want to go to Antarctica for?" I ask Wayne.

Wayne says he did it for the adventure. And that someday I would have to come over to his place to see the slides he took. He then tells us about the sauna on the boat.

"Sauna?" asks Andy, "Oi vey—why would you want a sauna on a Russian boat?"

Wayne explains that like the Russian and Turkish bath houses in New York, the Russians had one on the boat. That the temperature was so hot in the sauna you could only last in the thing for a few minutes. And that when you went into it, you were beaten with a tree branch.

"A what?" I asked, not believing what I just heard.

"A tree branch. With twigs and leaves on it and everything," explains Wayne.

"Why would you want that done?" asks Andy with his "The More You Know" baseball cap.

"It improves your circulation," explains Wayne, "they hit you all over your body, and it stimulates the blood to move."

"Are you naked?" I ask.

"Yeah," says Wayne.

"So what happens if you get a woody when the hot Russian chick is beating you with a tree branch?" I ask, feeling myself get excited. I could just imagine Barbara Bach from *The Spy Who Loved Me* hitting me with a stick, while we were both naked. Her hard nipples dripping with sweat from the heat, and my penis, standing straight up like a Walter PP7.

"What hot Russian chick?" asks Wayne. "It's the Captain of the boat that hits you. He's a Captain of the Russian Navy. The only wood you'll get from the old mean sailor is from his tree branch."

"Does he hit you in the nuts?" I ask, feeling my testicles shrink up to the size of raisins.

"Everywhere," explains Wayne.

We ride in silence for quite a while.

Finally, we arrive in Goshen, New York.

We can tell by all the yellow signs with the black outlines of cows on them. Well, those, and tractors. I guess they both like to cross the street a lot. The grass is probably greener on the other side.

We arrive at Bob's club, Joe's Bar, to not only find the large neon sign gone, but also all the patrons. The only people we see as we pull into the small bar—set in the middle of a cow field in Buttfuck, New York—is Bob and a friend of his.

"Hey Bob," I say, as Wayne, Andy, and me step out of the school van.

"You guys are late," says Bob, "you missed everything."

I look at Bob and his club, which once was a little red school house back in the 1800s, and wonder just how much I could have missed.

"We had sixteen paying customers," explains Bob, "and seven strippers. But they're all gone now."

"All gone?" I say, kind of disappointed. "But I wanted a lap dance. You promised me a lap dance."

"Well, the girls are in their cars, leaving now. What took you so long getting up here?"

I explain that we left the city late, that we hit traffic on The West Side Highway, and that Russian navy captains like to beat you with tree braches in saunas.

Bob tilts his head and looks at me like I'm nuts. The same thing my dog P.J. does.

After talking for a bit, Bob takes Andy, Wayne, and me into his club. Inside, a couple of girls and a couple of guys are rolling up some gym mats.

"Hey Furious George," says one of the guys. I recognize him from the last time we played there. The only time.

I ask the guys and girls how the stripping went and they tell me that it was pretty wild. That girls were fingering themselves, and then wiping their juices on the lips of horny guys seated around the "club." That they themselves did a bit of wrestling, but it was nothing compared to the wild lap

dances that went on in the back room.

I silently curse Wayne. Maybe if he had driven faster than two miles an hour, we would have gotten some action.

As we talk about how wild the night was, Bob tells us that even with only sixteen paying customers, he had made more money that night than he had with his biggest "punk" night.

I told him I told him so.

We continue to all stand around and talk, as I take some Pepsi cans out of Bob's refrigerator and give them to Andy and Wayne. Bob has no liquor license. I guess he couldn't get one and have completely naked girls dancing around at the same time. That'd be illegal.

The phone rings as we are all talking about going to another strip bar, and also while we are hitting on Bob's cute waitress.

Finally Bob gets off the phone, and has a sullen look on his face.

"What's up?" I say to him, kind of happy he looks depressed. That fucker closed shop early, and I missed my chance for some boobies in my face and pussy in my lap.

"My friend the cop just called," explains Bob, "it seems he and one of the strippers he had volunteered to drive home are at the gas station down the street."

"Is he getting a blowjob?" I ask.

"Geezus, George," says Bob, "he says there is something wrong with her. Like she is having a seizure or something. She's really sick. He called an ambulance because she wanted to go to the hospital."

"That sucks," says Andy.

"So," explains Bob, "if you guys don't mind, I want to wait around until my friend the cop calls back and tells me what's going on. Then we'll go to another strip club in Newburgh. I know the owners. We can probably get in for free, and I might be able to get you that lap dance, George."

I feel my penis begin to thaw and tell Bob that everything is cool.

About ten minutes later the phone does not ring again, and Bob starts to panic. He asks us if we mind following him to the gas station where the cop called from, to see what's going on. He says after that we will definitely go see some strippers. Wayne says, "of course."

Andy, Wayne, and I pile into the Youth Organization school vehicle, and follow Bob in his little car. Wayne drives slow past the cow and tractor crossing signs, in fear he'll run over something. Eventually we make it to the gas station, where we see an ambulance pulling out, with a couple of cars following it.

Bob motions for us to follow him from his car, so we do. We end up in a convoy with three other cars, following some damn ambulance, which probably has the seizing stripper inside.

We make our way up a small hill, and take a couple of turns. Then, we stop at a red light, because the ambulance does, and when it eventually turns green, we follow it up another hill to a sign which reads "Arden Hill Hospital."

There we make a right, and follow the ambulance up to the E.R. entrance. The building itself is quite small, and Wayne wonders out loud if perhaps it isn't a veterinary hospital.

We then pile out of the van and ask Bob what's going on. He points us to his friend, the off-duty cop.

"I dunno what's wrong with her," says the cop, a good-looking guy with reddish hair, a firm, muscular build, and a large wedding ring, "she just said she was gonna be sick, and started shaking and stuff, saying she wanted me to drive her to the hospital in Newburgh."

"So why is she here?" I ask.

"Because," says the cop, "there was no way I was gonna drive her that far. Man, my car is new. I don't want her getting sick all over it."

We follow Bob, and the cop, into the E.R. As we do, we meet a girl who seems to know both Bob and the cop.

"Hi," she says to Wayne, Andy, and me. "I'm Alex".

Rob explains that the big-breasted girl standing before us is also a stripper, who also danced at the club tonight, and that she knew the stripper having the seizure.

"I don't really know her," explains Alex, "I mean, I just met her tonight."

We enter the hospital through some sliding doors with signs on them that read "Warning: Only three weeks of water left at Arden Hill Hospital. Please use water cautiously."

There goes any thoughts of a quick shower, I think to myself.

Once inside, we see a bunch of doctors all standing around the stripper. We can't see her face, but we do see her boobs, poking out of her shirt. Nice. And firm.

"Excuse me," says some doctor, all decked out in scrubs, "are any of you family?"

We all shake our heads no.

"Do any of you know this girl? Like her name?" he asks.

Again we all shake our heads no. Then Alex says she can look in her purse and find out.

The doctor looks at us very suspiciously, then tells us we have to leave the E.R. part of the hospital, and go wait in the waiting room.

We ask where that is, and he points to a door five feet away.

We enter "the waiting room," which is nothing more than about ten chairs and a nurse. A hot nurse. Who is sitting behind a desk behind some blue plexi-glass. Every time she stands up, Andy and Wayne stare at her firm butt. They both seem very excited by her, but I'm intrigued with Alex, the stripper.

"So how was your night?" I ask her, as she sits in one of the ten or so chairs, with her large breasts heaving under her tight-knit sweater.

"Okay," she says, "but I could have made a lot more money if I had danced in Porchester."

I ask her if that is where she usually dances, and she tells me it is. She explains she knows Bob from his old club, and did him a favor by dancing for the rednecks that evening.

"Do you make a lot of money stripping?" asks Andy, as he too now stares at her large breasts, tight jeans, and long brown hair.

"About a hundred thousand a year," she says, sighing.

"Holy fuck," I say, "that's a lot of money."

"And I'm sure it's off the books," says Wayne.

"Well, yeah," says Alex.

"So that's like two hundred thousand dollars a year you make," explains Wayne.

"No," she says, "it's a hundred thousand dollars."

D'oh.

We talk some more, and Alex tells us she eventually wants to go back to college and learn Swedish.

"Why do you want to learn a language of a people that steal money from dead Jews?" I ask her.

She turns her head sideways and looks at me like P.J.

"I think," says Andy, "as George's lawyer, I can translate what my client is trying to say. Why would you fucking want to do that?"

Alex explains that she wants to learn Swedish. Massage.

"Ooooh," we all say, at the same time.

"Are you good at giving massages?" I ask her. I do have a bit of a headache, and the thought of those hands, and, those breasts, touching my neck, seems swell.

"No," she says, completely deadpan, "I don't know how to do that yet. I only know how to give lap dances."

Suddenly a light bulb goes on above my head. Not one of the florescent hospital ones. A cartoon one.

"How much?" I ask her.

"How much for what?" Alex asks.

"For a lap dance," I say. I was pissed we got to Bob's club late, and it looked like we were gonna be in this fucking Arden Hill Hospital all night, so what the fuck.

"Here?" she asks, looking around at all of us, and the nurse with the cute butt behind the blue plexi-glass.

"Yeah," I say.

"I don't think that's such a good idea," she says, "but here!"

Suddenly she lifts her sweater up, and we all get a good look at her huge and firm breasts. Her tan is even. All over.

"Whoa," I say.

"Wow," says Andy.

"Ummm," Wayne stammers.

"Come on," I say, "how much for a lap dance here in the Arden Hill Hospital emergency waiting room?"

Alex waves me off, telling me it's a bad idea. The nurse behind the blue plexi-glass must be hearing all of this, but shows no sign of it. She just stares at her computer. And smirks a bit.

"Please," I say. I was obsessed. I had to have a lap dance.

"What do you think, Bob?" Alex asks my friend, the club owner.

"I think you could walk out of here with more money then you have now," explains Bob.

"Isn't anyone worried about the stripper in the E.R.?" asks the off duty cop.

"Nope," most everyone replies.

"I didn't even meet her until tonight," repeats Alex.

"Come on," I say to Alex, "Over there, by that little desk, the MRI registration area, it's private, no one can see us. You can give me a lap dance there."

"The nurse might be able to see," she says, "especially if she walks about seven feet.

"So what?" I say.

"What do you think?" Alex asks Wayne and Andy.

"I'll give you twenty-five bucks," I say.

"Give him a lap dance," says Wayne.

"Yeah," says Andy, "as his lawyer, I think it's a good idea."

"Okay," says Alex, smiling. She then takes my hand and leads me to the M.R.I. registration area.

I give her the twenty-five bucks as I'm seated in a small chair, and she takes off her shirt.

I'm amazed. Her breasts are large. And firm. I mean, like her nipples point upwards.

"Andy," I yell, "get over here!"

Andy comes over and sees Alex straddling my lap, with her breasts two inches from my face.

"Susan B. Anthony dollars," says Andy, referring to her nipples.

We both smile.

"If you want me to give you a lap dance," she says, "I need music."

So I start to sing "Betty Krocker, Punk Rocker."

"Betty Krocker, Punk Rocker, Easy Bake Oven, Eat That Muffin," I sing.

"I hate punk rock," she says.

"Ummm," I stammer.

"As your lawyer," says Andy, who is watching everything very closely, "It is my duty to provide you with a suitable soundtrack for this very voluptuous lap dance."

He then starts to sing "Fly Me To The Moon."

Suddenly Alex starts gyrating on my lap. I feel myself get a bit excited, but I find myself more amazed than anything. As she moves, her breasts remain stationary.

"You like it?" she asks.

I nod my head as I smell body oil all over her stomach and breasts.

Suddenly Alex puts her hands on the outsides of her boobs and pushes them together. Then she pushes them into my face. Hard.

I hear something crack.

Suddenly I feel tears welling up in my eyes, and my nose hurts like a sonofabitch. But I don't say anything.

Finally Alex removes her breasts from my face and I take a deep breath. Air. Phew.

As my nose stings I ask Alex a question.

"Are those real?" I say.

"What do you think?" she responds.

"Silicon," I say.

She looks at me meanly, than slaps me in the nose again with her breasts. Hard.

"They're saline, stupid," she says.

"Can I touch them?" I ask.

"Sure," she says.

I reach up and touch them. The skin is really soft, but with the gentlest of squeezes, I feel what seems like over-inflated water ballons.

"Kind of like water ballons," she says, "huh?"

"You read my mind," I say.

"Can Andy touch them?" I ask.

"Sure," she says.

I interrupt Andy, who, by this time is singing "My Way," and tell him to come over and feel her breasts.

He tells me, that as my lawyer, it's his duty to test the merchandise.

He gives her a quick and gentle squeeze.

"As your lawyer," he then says, "It is my obligation to inform you that these breasts feel healthy and normal. Those of a nice and charming young woman."

I smile.

Alex looks confused.

She then takes off her pants and shows me that her vagina is pierced.

"That's a ruby hanging on that loop," she explains.

"Nice pussy," I tell her.

"Thank you," she says.

"Hey Wayne," I yell, "Andy, go get Wayne, he's gotta see and feel this!"

Andy gets Wayne, who takes one look at what is going on, then walks away.

"He's just jealous," I say.

Andy starts singing again, and Alex continues to writhe around on my lap in the MRI registration area.

After a while, though, I get bored. And my nose really starts to hurt. I also begin to feel guilty. Here I was, with this girl with huge hooters dancing around on my lap, and at home, probably bored to death, was my dog, P.J. He probably missed his daddy.

Finally I told Alex I had had enough, and asked her and her pierced pussy and saline salt-bags to kindly get off of me. She did.

Andy stopped singing "My Way," and we all walked the long seven feet back to where everyone else was. Including the nurse behind the blue plexi-glass window. Who looked up at me, and I swear, smiled.

"So," said Alex, after it was all over, what did you think?

I told her. The truth.

"Well," I said, "You really do have a great body. That all-over tan is fantastic. You have great breasts and a crotch that is something I wouldn't want to beat around the bush about. But in my book, you are still not as great as someone else."

"Who?" asked Alex.

So I reached into the pocket of my leather jacket. And took out the picture. The Polaroid. Of the love of my life. And showed it to her.

"You're comparing me to a Yorkshire Terrier?" she yelled.

"Baby," I said, "you are at least one step below him in my book".

I expected her to hit me in the nose again. But this time with her fists.

But instead she just said, "Yeah, I understand, I have a Pomeranian."

***

On the way back to Manhattan, Wayne and Andy discussed the evening's events, while I bitched about how my nose and head really hurt. That those boobies may have given me a concussion.

"As your lawyer," said Andy, "It is my duty to inform you that you should really have yourself checked out. You could be really hurt."

As we got closer to the city, my head began to pound more and more.

After crossing the George Washington Bridge, I had a full blown migraine.

The next thing I knew we were passing a hospital in midtown. St. Clare's.

I asked Wayne if maybe we could stop there. At the emergency room. That my head and nose really hurt.

"Hell," said Andy from the back seat, "maybe we can even get some action. Hospitals are fun!"

"Yeah," says Wayne, "and you know what? I think I finally figured out why we had to drive upstate to see some action. The NYPD and Giuliani just don't support the hospital lap dance scene."

I would have laughed if I wasn't in such pain.

***

"So that's the whole story," I explain to My Future Ex-Wife as my nose continues to swell.

"Well," she says, standing next to me in the bathroom as P.J. looks on, worried, "I hope you learned your lesson, George."

"I did, honey," I say, "I swear, I did!"

"And what lesson would that be?" she asks, again, with her hands on her hips.

"That you'll never ever get implants, right?"

My Future Ex-Wife just looked at me, then squeezed my nose. Hard.

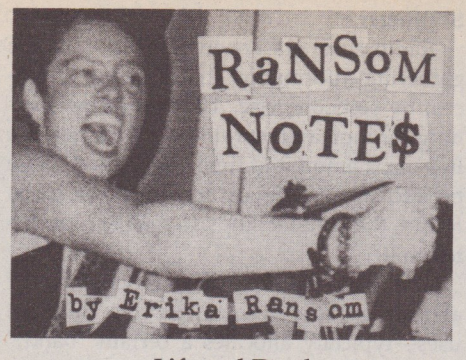
I screamed in pain.

"I'm sorry," she said, "did that hurt?"

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

1. www.georgetabb.com
2. www.afropunk.com—some of the coolest people I've met in years! More about them later...but check it out. Now.
3. And so, after a couple of years in Phoenix, I now find myself back in New York City. I guess you can take the boy outta the city...
4. Again, thanks to everyone who has been helping me work through all the mental and body damge I've incurred lately.
5. Special shout outs to Seanie and Brian in Phoenix. I'm sorry I bailed on the town—but more than that—on you!



Life and Death

At the moment, I am surrounded by death.

Tennessee called me back unexpectedly with bad news, jarring me out of my own little world.

This morning I heard a church organ play at a funeral service, last rites for my childhood best friend's father. He died of cancer, a disease that seems to eat so many lives in our time.

My friend is 31, an amazing woman with a two-year old girl who is as gorgeous as her mother.

In high school Priscilla and I used to smoke pot outside her window on the roof when she was grounded and she wasn't allowed to leave the house. We got drunk on wine coolers together for the first time hanging out in my room, and I puked spaghetti all over her. We drank coffee at Waffle House every night in the summer and played Scrabble and talked about life, writing poems on napkins and building castles from creamers. We kept each other alive and sane while trying to find our way.

I didn't know her dad very well, except as a parental figure that we tried to avoid pissing off, and who occasionally drove us to school. But I cried quite a lot today, wiping my face with back of my hand, as I didn't have any tissues. Seeing Priscilla, her mom and her younger brothers so upset made me so sad.

Death is a fucking bastard.

And it is always there, always waiting.

I left the church with my mother, and went straight to the local hospital, to visit my 95-year old grandfather who is in the Intensive Care Unit.

Two days ago, the same day that I found out about Priscilla's father, I got the news that my grandfather was in the middle of emergency brain surgery.

A CAT scan revealed that he had a blood clot in his head, as large as a grapefruit and the surgery was to drain the accumulated blood.

He is 95 years old, and any type of surgery at all is risky. I canceled all plans and thoughts of going on tour with DISRESPECT, going to Pointless Fest, and got on a plane to Tennessee. I haven't been home in a long time, and I wanted to be there if it was time to say goodbye.

I am still here, and saw him this morning. He is hooked up to a computer and monitoring devices and all kinds of IVs.

But he is doing better, and was eating the mashed potatoes and creamed spinach hospital food, which is amazing on its own. He recognized me, and was smiling a lot, even with tubes of blood dripping out of his head, eating crappy hospital food. Life is surreal.

My mom asked him what he thought about my red mohawk, and he whispered to her with a toothless grin, "I thought it better not to say anything." Ha ha!

My granddad was more of a father than my dad ever was, and it is going to be hard when he goes.

At the church service for Priscilla's father, the white-haired priest kept talking about Heaven,

"This life is hard, this life will challenge us, but through the grace of God's mercy and love we will all be reunited in the bliss of afterlife. A person's death is only a temporary period of separation. You will soon see them again in Heaven."

Bullshit.

Bullshit.

Bullshit.

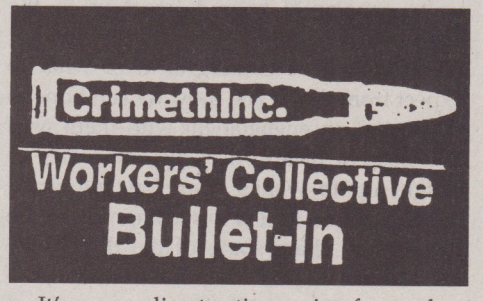
We all get just one shot at this thing called life. Enjoy it while you can.

Love people while they are with you, and then when the time comes, let them go and celebrate their life.

I try to remember the good times, and remember to love and appreciate those around me even more.

I am not afraid of death, although I cry.

—Erika



It's a new direct action recipe for readers of the *MRR* CrimethInc. column, and fresh out of the laboratory! This month, our guest specialist explores the use of communications systems and technology.

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When I reflect on the successes and failures I've witnessed over my years of direct action experience, one theme recurs over and over: the absolute failure of tactical

communications at almost all of these events. Sure, some of us are ideologically opposed to technology and all that, but if we're ever going to pose a real threat to this fucked up system we might need to be prepared to use more than signal fires and carrier pigeons. In all seriousness, I believe effective and efficient methods of communication are essential to the success of most direct action strategies.

Consider the police. How are they able to do all the fucked up things they do? Once upon a time, I would have answered, "Because they have the guns"—but when I thought about this more, I realized that it wasn't a satisfactory answer. Sure they have guns, but so do a lot of us. Things became even cloudier when I realized that they don't usually even have an advantage in numbers. Often, there are only a handful of officers patrolling a large area. So I've started thinking it has something to do with their system of communications. It seems silly, but imagine the police had no communications network. If all of a sudden their cell phones, radios, and computers just stopped working—how would they operate? They would have to sit at the station until a complaint came in—via courier, I suppose—then go to the disturbance, deal with it, and return. Meanwhile, officers in the field would be unable to receive any information as the situation changed. This system of communications would be so centralized and inefficient that the police department would… well, they'd be as ineffective as we are.

Indeed, that's where most of us are at right now. The communications infrastructure we use is so haphazard and unreliable that we're rarely able to receive critical information when it counts. Consequently, we're constantly behind, reacting to the actions of our opponents, never knowing where they'll be coming from or what to expect from them. The most we can hope to do is start an engagement with them with the element of surprise; but once they've caught up to what's going on, we rarely regain the initiative. I'm writing this article in order to share some of the things I've learned about gathering and communicating information rapidly in a protest or direct action situation, with the hope that maybe next time it will be those motherfuckers on the run.

Technology

There is a great deal of communications technology available to us today. I'm going to cover, briefly, a few devices I think anarchists could use.

Scanners:

Radio scanners are invaluable tools for gathering information that is being broadcast by someone else. They work by scanning through a great number of frequencies in a short amount of time looking for active broadcasts. When an active broadcast is found, the scanner stops so the user can listen to it.

The FCC—the agency responsible for allocating radio frequencies for different uses—typically allocates a certain "band," or group of frequencies, for each technology. This means that if, for example, you wanted to listen to the transmissions of air traffic controllers, you could get on the internet and find out that the FCC has allocated the range of frequencies from about 960 MHz to about 1215 MHz for that purpose. You could then use a scanner to search rapidly between these frequencies, picking up any transmission that occurred. With the right scanner, potentially connected to the right computer, you could listen in on almost anything.

For the purposes of this article, I'll focus on monitoring police frequencies. Believe it or not, most police frequencies are broadcast in the clear for anyone with a scanner to listen to. I guess it's done that way so reporters and military veterans can listen in and feel up-to-date or something.

Getting Started:

Scanning your local police department may be easier than you ever imagined. I suggest going online and using Google to search for local frequencies. Radio hobbyists are a resourceful and charitable bunch, and they usually post the frequencies they find on the Internet. Another place you can find frequencies is in books or magazines. Radio Shack carries a book that lists many of the police, fire, and EMT frequencies in the country. If all else fails, you can usually find police channels by scanning around, especially between 150Mhz and 160Mhz. They're not difficult to recognize!

Once you have the frequencies, consult your scanner's manual (you did keep it, right?). Depending on your scanner, you should be able to program all the police frequencies into a "bank" of frequencies, so as to scan only that bank. If you can do this, you'll hear just the police frequencies. Next, you'll have to adjust the squelch. What is that, you ask? Typically, there will be a knob on your radio next to the volume knob. This is squelch. When you turn it all the way down, you will hear that nasty radio noise you hear when your car radio isn't turned to a station. Slowly turn up the squelch and the noise will go away. This is a necessary step, because it adjusts your scanner for the amount of noise that is in your area. If you don't do this, your radio won't be able to differentiate between a real signal and mere noise. OK, now you're ready to start scanning.

When you first start scanning, the police may sound like they're speaking some utterly unrecognizable dialect of English. Don't be put off—keep listening, and things will start to make sense. The first thing you'll probably pick up on is them running names, license plates, and so on. They'll broadcast full names, birth dates, addresses, and social security numbers. You'll also start to recognize when they're being dispatched, to which locations, and what for. Sometimes an officer will even announce his home phone number right over the air! The more you listen, the better you'll get at figuring out their jargon.

Trunking:

When looking for frequencies on the Internet, you may find that the agency you want to listen to uses a "trunking" system. What the hell is that?

The term "trunking" refers to a system that uses advanced technology to split up a limited amount of radio frequencies. Imagine that the government of a large city—say, Chicago—wants to set up a radio network. Chicago is a very big city and has a great deal of communications needs. The Police Department, the Fire Department, the Parks Department, the Water Department, the garbage collectors, and many more all need to communicate, and many of these agencies will need to use at least a few frequencies. This creates a problem, because radio frequencies are not an abundant resource. Even a hundred or so frequencies might be impossible to come by. So, someone figured out how to utilize fewer frequencies for more activity. Most people using a radio aren't using it all or even most of the time. Let's say that Chicago needs a hundred separate channels, but they'll only use each channel about ten percent of the time. That means that if there were a way to share frequencies, they could put all 100 channels on only ten frequencies. This is what trunking does.

When dealing with a trunking system, one is presented not with frequencies but with "workgroups." Every radio is assigned to a workgroup, and each workgroup has a different purpose. The police, for example, might have five different workgroups representing different districts. The system is controlled by a computer that broadcasts a digital signal on its own frequency. Whenever someone in a certain workgroup

presses the button to broadcast something, the computer assigns them a frequency to broadcast on and tells every other radio in that workgroup to listen to that frequency. In use, the system is totally transparent; it doesn't seem any different than using any other radio.

What does this mean for you? First, if the agency you want to listen to uses a trunking system, you will need a trunking scanner. There are several different trunking systems, so before getting a scanner, figure out which kind you'll need. The scanner I have can scan Motorola or EDACS trunked systems, which account for almost all of them. You'll also have to read your manual and learn how to program in the system you want to listen to. It's not that hard, I promise! Also, if you're scanning around and hear a bunch of random tidbits that don't relate to one another all on the same frequency, you're probably listening to bits of a trunked system.

A very small amount of agencies are now using "digital" trunking. I don't know much about this yet, except that you have to get a really expensive scanner to follow it. If your local department uses this, you might be shit out of luck.

If used properly, a scanner can keep you one step ahead of the police in the streets. At a recent small-scale street protest in a little college town, we used one to learn where police were setting up, how many of them there were, and what their standing orders were. They even unknowingly helped us find the local Starbucks and Army recruiting station! This allowed us to maneuver around town without getting cornered, and to disperse before they were ordered to arrest us. Not bad!

FRS/GMRS Radio:

I most frequently see people at protests attempting to communicate by means of FRS (Family Radio Service) or GMRS (General Mobile Radio Service) walkie-talkies. These radios are often available on the "optional payment plan" at department stores, outdoor stores, Wal-Mart, and so on. Though they are cheap or free, these radios have severe limitations.

The Family Radio Service is one of the "Citizen's Bands" designated by the FCC to permit families and friends to communicate over short distances. You don't have to have a license to use one. However, the FCC has severely limited the output power on FRS radios, which means that at most they have only a one-mile range. In practice, this range is much shorter, especially in major cities where there are many tall concrete buildings and other kinds of interference. My humble opinion is that these radios are totally useless in any important situation. They are simply not reliable, not to mention static-ridden. I've seen FRS radios fail to communicate over a distance of only one block!

The General Mobile Radio Service is a radio service specifically established by the FCC "for short-distance two-way communications to facilitate the activities of an adult individual and his or her immediate family members." The regulations allow for more powerful transmitters (one to five watts), which means that GMRS radios have a significantly greater range. These radios tend to be much higher quality. However, in order to legally operate a GMRS radio, you must first obtain a license from the FCC. I am still somewhat dubious about how effective these radios can be in direct action, but they are definitely a much better option than FRS radios.

The operation of FRS and GMRS radios is basically the same, and usually very simple. There is typically a small LCD screen that displays a number prominently. This is the channel you're operating on. Everyone who wishes to communicate together must set their walkie-talkie to the same frequency. Some radios also have what is referred to as a "decoder" or "digital decoder." If your radio has this, a smaller number will appear next to the channel number. This is the decoder number. A decoder allows your radio to filter out unwanted transmissions by only letting those with the right decoder message through. If you are communicating in a network that has some radios with decoders and some without, those radios with decoders must set their decoder number to "0" in order to be understood by the others. Check your manual to learn how to do this.

Amateur Radio Service (Ham Radio):

Ham radio is a service specified by the FCC to allow individuals solely with a personal interest (as opposed to economic interest) to operate on several different radio bands. The ham radio specification gives an operator a lot of freedom as to the frequencies and equipment she can legally use.

The benefits of ham radio are extensive. The specification allows the use of transmitters as powerful as 1000 watts in some cases! It also allows you to use frequencies that are so low that their wavelength can be 10 or 20 or more meters long. This means that the signal can travel extreme distances before fading. People have often used ham radio to communicate with people halfway around the world! You can even use ham radio to bounce a signal off satellites or the moon.

Like any thing else, though, ham radio has its downsides. For one, legally, you have to be licensed to operate a ham radio. Also, the equipment can be relatively expensive and difficult to obtain. It can also be a bit more complicated to operate.

The licensing process for ham radio is pretty straightforward. Local ham radio hobby groups sponsor testing all over the country. You can find out where the nearest test is being given at www.arrl.org. To study for the test, I recommend finding a copy of *Now You're Talking!* This book covers everything you need to know for the test. Honestly though, the test is very easy. If you're pressed for time, consider just reading through the questions in the back of the book: these include every possible question that could be given on the exam.

First, you'll want to take the "Technician" exam. This will give you access to the most popular ham radio bands. If you get really interested, you might consider taking the "Tech Plus" (for which you'll need to learn Morse code), "General," or "Extra" exams, each of which offers added privileges. Another reason to own a ham radio license is that it often gives you the right to carry a scanner on the street. Many states have ordinances prohibiting this, but they usually have exceptions for licensed amateurs.

Ham radios have a great deal of potential for our purposes. There are many handheld ham radios available that would be perfect for use in the streets. Because these radios are relatively small, they are usually limited to only five or six watts, which is relatively low. However, amateur hobbyists have set up a network of "repeaters" all over the country that allow you to extend the range of your radio. Essentially, a repeater is a station that receives broadcasts on one frequency, then rebroadcasts them on a slightly different one; for example, a repeater could pick up a transmission from a relatively weak handheld radio and rebroadcast it at a few hundred watts or more. Suddenly, the range of that relatively weak handheld becomes immense. Imagine a comms team able to communicate not only throughout a whole city, but an entire region!

All in all, I think ham radio is a valuable resource. I find it to be a much better option than FRS or GMRS for anyone that can acquire the technology and take the time to get the license.

SMS Text Messaging:

For anyone that's been living in a cave recently—I'm envious. But you may not have heard about this wonderful technolo-

gy! SMS text messaging is the same thing that people all over the place are using to send little notes back and forth between cell phones. Basically, it's a protocol that allows people to send simple plain-text messages to each other via wireless devices.

SMS doesn't just work on cell phones either. You can also receive messages with an alpha-numeric pager. They've even created little two-way pagers that have a full keyboard so you can receive and respond to text messages.

A corporate defector I know grabbed a few of these two-way pagers for me once. They turned out to be very useful. Messages came in without any possible loss of clarity. They worked almost anywhere, and you could respond quickly. I'm not sure how much the service cost because a major investment firm was paying for mine, but I've heard that it's somewhere between $10 and $20 a month.

The recent release of txtmob.com really established text messaging as a tactical tool. Txtmob.com is the brainchild of those lovely people over at the institute of applied autonomy (appliedautonomy.com). Essentially, the service acts like an email list. People subscribe to a group, and messages sent to the group get rebroadcast to everyone else in the group. Just like an email list, a txtmob group can be invite-only or open for anyone to join, and it can be moderated (only one person can send messages to the group) or un-moderated (anyone can send to the group).

Txtmob was created for use during the Democratic National Convention protests in Boston. It was used by the Indymedia collective to rebroadcast reports as they received them. In this way people were sent timely and clear information regarding the activities of police and protesters in the streets.

I find this technology to be one of the most promising to protesters in the next few years. To begin with, SMS enable devices are all over the place, many people have SMS enable cell-phones, and pagers are pretty cheap. SMS can enable a large number of people to communicate almost simultaneously and with little risk of distortion or confusion. In addition, SMS devices are almost always in signal range, and messages can be broadcast across the country.

Putting It All Together

I can already hear you squirming impatiently in your seat, dear reader. You're saying, "The technology's all fine and good, but how can we use it to form effective comms teams?" In all honesty, I'm not a hundred percent sure. I have yet to operate with a comms team that worked completely satisfactorily. I do, however, have some good tips about using comms, and some ideas as to what a really good comms team might look like.

Comms Team Structure:

The most important step in forming a solid communications infrastructure for an action is getting right people for the job. Those participating in a comms team should, ideally, be cool, calm, and fast-thinking. There are many roles individuals can play, and it's important to match the right person to each one.

The most visible member of the comms team is the scout. Scouts are primarily useful in a mass-protest or march situation. It is their job to collect information about the movements of the police or any other potential threat to the action taking place. Scouts should make efforts to make themselves hard to spot and hard to capture. To this end, I've used two basic approaches: bicycles and disguises. Bicycles are great for scouts because they allow them to move very quickly about a large area. A quick and experienced bicyclist is also very difficult to stop and arrest. Disguise is a more effective technique if the group needs continuous updates on or from a given location. In the past, I've scouted an area by donning a nice suit and drinking coffee on a patio of interest. No one thinks twice about a "business person" drinking coffee and talking on a cell phone or typing on a laptop.

I believe a solid comms group should also include someone whose sole job is to monitor police transmissions. In some cases, it is actually beneficial to have several people doing this. I say this because a person can only listen in on one transmission at a time, but in a mass-protest situation there will likely be lots of police transmissions occurring simultaneously. It would be the duty of those filling this role to report back on any announced police strategies, movements, arrests, standing orders, and so on.

Scouts and radio monitors will, in many circumstances, be generating a great deal of information—too much, perhaps, to make any sense to the great majority of people participating in the action. For this reason, I believe that it can be necessary to have several people whose task it is to sort through the information, pick out the pertinent parts, and re-broadcast these to the masses. Perhaps we could call these people the vanguard! Seriously though, I do think that some situations might warrant a small level of centralization in this regard. Individuals occupying this position could make sure that important information is relayed by as many types of media as possible: e.g., radio, text messaging, cell phone calls, and so on. They could also find and disseminate crucial logistical data, such as potential alternate routes, by looking at street maps, sewer maps, and such.

At the protests against the World Bank that occurred in Prague late in 2000, there was an information clearinghouse in the form of a room with several telephones operated by people equipped with maps. They received constant updates as events developed, and plotted the movements of police and protesters on these maps; they also took phone calls from demonstrators in need of this information. By many accounts, this service was critical to the success of the protests.

Of course, your comms team may find it handy to have a tech-geek around. (I volunteer!) This person could make sure that the radios are working right, the scanners are programmed, the txtmob list is set up, the repeaters are functional, and so forth.

Final Thoughts

The most successful comms team I've worked with was involved in a police brutality march in my hometown. Several months prior to it, a young and unarmed man of color had been brutally shot to death by the local pigs. There had been a great deal of outcry at the time, and during the raucous protests that followed we'd befriended some of the slain man's friends. They had organized this police brutality march and asked us to support it. We gladly volunteered, but didn't want to usurp the protest and turn it into an "anarchist" or worse yet "middle-class white kid" march. So we spoke with the organizers and decided that we would act as a comms team that could help monitor the situation and bring in physical support if needed.

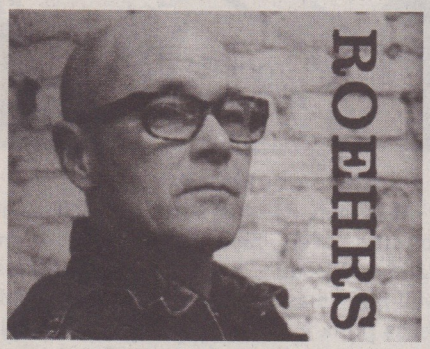
The march was set to occur in the downtown financial district—which, as you may guess, is not often frequented by ragamuffin punk kids. Accordingly, we decided to go in disguise. We all pulled out our best court clothes, and teamed up in pairs. Each pair had a cell phone and an item capable of receiving txt messages, and some had walkie-talkies. These groups walked around and acted as scouts.

There was also a group of two or three that stationed themselves poolside at a fancy downtown hotel. Their job was to monitor the situation, and keep everyone advised on updates. This group was equipped with small walkie-talkies, cell phones, a laptop, and a well-concealed police scanner. They operated a phone tree to relay information and manned the txt-mob list.

As it turned out, the organizers we had befriended fell far short of their goals for turnout. This prevented the march from becoming the raucous event we had thought it might, but also made it even more dangerous for the relatively small group that took the streets. Still, because we were able to keep abreast of police movements and similar developments, the protesters stayed safe, succeeded in blocking downtown traffic, and were able to drop several banners from high-visibility locations. After everything was done, they were all very grateful for our presence—they thought we were just about the most ninja thing they had ever seen. We even had to kindly excuse ourselves when they wanted to take group photos with all our undercover agents!

I think that this example offers a good starting model for the kind of comms groups we should be working to perfect. I've often imagined a horde of highly informed protesters emerging from all sorts of crevices and alleys to descend upon an out-maneuvered police force. Such actions are a definite possibility for us if we take comms more seriously. As more of us learn to utilize the available technologies and strategize accordingly, we'll become more and more capable of dealing with and confronting even the most well-equipped and well-trained police forces. And then—well, maybe my next article will be on military comms equipment for anarchist insurgent forces.

See you at the barricades!



Tomorrow Is Too Late

Fuck yes! The legendary BONECRUSHER came up to the Bay Area for two strong shows! All the skins and punks at Studio Z in San Francisco and the next night at the Phoenix Theater in Petaluma had a rock n' roll extravaganza. As you loyal BONECRUSHER fans already know, Noah is singing for BONECRUSHER and the band is enjoying its most powerful period yet. BONECRUSHER started in 1992 out of the ashes of that great Orange County, California punk band WOLFPACK. The BONECRUSHER had their debut with the release of *A World of Pain* on Lethal Records in 1995. They received high praise and accolades from fans, critics, and got second on *Flipside* magazine's list of "Best of OC Bands". After some time off, BONECRUSHER was back in late 1996. Fortunately, Mike Kanel was keeping the spirit alive and the momentum going with the addition of HFL's Pat Hall on guitar and Mr. Noah Lysek on drums. BONECRUSHER had new strength. In OC clubs, like Malone's Club in Anaheim and The Clipper Club in Long Beach, BONECRUSHER was blowing the headlining bands out of the water! Promoters were intimidated. It was a year before the next show. In 1997, David James, from Outsider Records, started putting on regular BONECRUSHER shows, recording the band in the studio, and releasing copious amounts of great BONECRUSHER product, including the much coveted *Angry Youth* single.

BONECRUSHER has had a dramatic roller coaster street-rock career in Orange County. The band is coming into its own presently and the album *Tomorrow Is Too Late* is going to carry BONECRUSHER into their rightful place at the top of the punk rock heap. Some of the songs on *Tomorrow Is Too Late* are going to stand as high points of street-rock in this era. Leading off the attack is "Corporate Nation" with some cutting lyrics. Read these words: "Word is on the streets / Government scam / Better stand up and do what you can / It's another excuse / And another bribe / Better stand up to stay alive / You never hear a politician say / 'We don't care' / 'Going to make a change in the state today' / 'The only catch is...There is a tax to pay' / Corporate nation / It's a fucking scam / Corporate nation / Time to make a stand / So damn fake / You take the bait / A dummy with a plastic smile / Don't back down / Stand on solid ground / Stop living your life in denial / Your eyes stay shut / Your in luck / Paycheck comes, give another cut / Get on your feet / Get off the ground / Stop getting kicked while you are down."

"Casualty" keeps up the furious momentum—BONECRUSHER wears their opinions on their shirtsleeves. Give some of these words a gander: "With an eye looking for attention / When things weren't right he'd break / One lie could cover up his mistakes / Three day run and he's got a gun / Still looking for an easy thrill / To bad you just became the kill / You're just a casualty / Got nothing to say / With your hands tied back / Victim of the state / Just a victim of circumstances / Always living off of second chances / You take whatever you can get / Fake regrets and your mind is set / Are you living or you just can't tell / Too late, your sitting in a cell." Fuck yes!

BONECRUSHER slams right into "Bad Lands" about the 'Alley Cats' and 'Sewer Rats' that come skulking about when the lights go out. Next, BONECRUSHER plows into the title cut, "Tomorrow Is Too Late". This fucking anthem has an urgency not encountered often in current punk circles. Read on: "Gotta make a change / Gotta stand up for today / We've got no time to wait / We can't waste our lives away / Broke down street / Swept off our feet / The carnivores have come / We've got to stop and fight / Can't afford to run / Gonna make a change today / Tomorrow is too late / Come with me, we'll pave the way / Tomorrow is too late / Another job is lost / Working class, they take the loss / Don't need no president / Average men can't make a cent / Broke down street, swept off our feet / The carnivores have come / We've got to stop and fight / Can't afford to run." Fuckin' A! That song is a ripper!

Side two starts with the boisterous "Today Is A Bad Day" with ominous lyrics about "Disturbing sounds of silence ringing in my head / On the other side of town, someone will soon be dead." That's bad news for someone – it might be you. "Hurt Me" is next, and this song is one of those rare moments when tough guys put together the perfect words to capture what a full-blown love for a woman feels like. The third song is "Changes" where BONECRUSHER laments "I've walked on many blocks / All the vagrants look the same / Dirty, filthy, insane to me / It's a walk of shame". This is a sad commentary of the state of our society. Song number ten on the *Tomorrow Is Too Late* LP is "Ghost Town" which gives the listener an eerie feeling as BONECRUSHER sings the "air is damp and the dirt is thick as thieves". Next up you get "Disappear" where BONECRUSHER sings about loyalty and survival. Read the lyrics to "Disappear": "In a state of nothingness, been burned / Fell down / None-the-less, I got up / To face another day, why walk astray / I've traveled the road unknown / Through thick and thin / Spent times alone / I've burned a bridge or two / Don't take offense, it's not just you and now / I wonder if you'll be there / When the weight falls on my shoulders / Not everything I

see is real / Not everything is clear / When the weight falls on your shoulders / In a state of loneliness / Been hurt, fell down, none the less / I got up to face another day / Why waste away / I've traveled the world unknown / Through thick and thin / Spent times alone / I've burned a bridge or two / Don't take offense, it's not just you and now." Yes! The final tune on the *Tomorrow Is Too Late* LP is a cover of "Urban Kids" by CHELSEA.

This album continues to cement BONECRUSHER's position as *the* premier Orange County punk band! It could be argued that BONECRUSHER is number one in all of California!

For BONECRUSHER product contact Knock Out Records, Postfach 100716, 46527 Dislaken, Germany. Fax: 02064/90864. www.knock-out.de.

Until next month—see you at the bar!

They Might Be the Ramones

Hayward, California, 1986. We just moved to our second place in town. The house was bigger, next to my school, and had fruit trees in the backyard, and strangely, a couple of old chickens, who even laid eggs, when they felt like it.

My sister was born that year, which changed things, of course. There was a lot of sound and fury in the house, along with the adorable gurgles and coos. She slept in a small cardboard box, which my stepmother, an extremely practical woman, wrapped in faux wood paneled shelf paper and lined with cozy blankets.

The next year, when my sister outgrew the cardboard box and was already collecting possessions at a furious rate, an addition of two upstairs rooms was built onto the house. We had always shared closer places, with cat smells, smoke smells, french fry smells, and it was a strange feeling, to be lifted so far away from my family for the first time, to watch us stretched out over space, from my new room smelling of paint. But it was exciting, too, promising solitude and autonomy. I rolled up a small tube of notebook paper, opened the bedroom window, and smoked it like a cigarette, to celebrate my exciting future.

My brother was across the hall, his many partitioned containers already filling with small parts to store and to use, in theory at least, for fixing things. Also in his room was my dad's old record player. He brought home his first record, Blondie's "The Tide is High," with "Suzy and Jeffry" on the flip side. On the cover Debbie Harry leaned on her elbows, on a bridge, in a New York summer haze. "*I'm* not the kind of girl, *who* gives up just like *that*, oh *no*-oh-oh-oh," lifted us even higher, farther from my dad's stacks of Hank Williams and CSNY records downstairs in the living room. It would be a few years before I came back down to them.

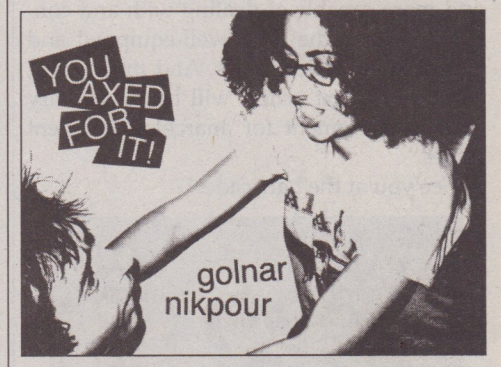
The next year, as I turned twelve and my brother fourteen, as his hair gradually acquired blonde streaks and a floppy mop that hung down over his eyes, more surprises appeared in the upstairs tape player—tapes copied from his new friends at school. It was the stuff that appeals to alienated adolescents the country over, the musical accompaniments to Vonnegut and Salinger. With the song titles written in pencil on the covers. They Might Be Giants. The Ramones. I put both of these on while my brother was out meeting girls at the bowling alley or whatever, and I don't even think I danced around—I just listened, with the hairs standing up on my arms. That's a funny time, before you acquire any musical sophistication, when you just react physically.

It was only yesterday that I first thought about these two bands as being at all connected, outside of their influence in my seventh-grade life. I was just home from New York a few days ago, and staying the night at my mom's, unable to sleep, vaguely sad and disturbed about leaving the city, and a little unwilling to start being home again. I turned on the cable TV and found the They Might Be Giants documentary, *Gigantic*. In the film, someone mentions that They Might Be Giants's fans never get older—they are always about fourteen, and someone hypothesizes (correctly, I think) that this is because the songs move you at this age in a way they can't later, with the cleverness of the lyrics and the catchy melodies like "Ana Ng." The problem facing more grown up music fans, including and perhaps especially older teenagers, is that TMBG doesn't rock—and there's only so long you want to be in your head at that age. The Ramones don't have this problem. The lyrics may be brilliant only accidentally, but the force of the music never gets old. Really—it never gets old!

I went to see the *End of the Century*, the newish Ramones movie, this summer when Kat came to visit. It was the middle of the afternoon, and the teenage girl at the counter, who I knew a little, let us in for free, popcorn included. Two other people in the theater, a couple. There were problems with the reel, problems with the sound—it was all somehow very appropriately unprofessional and even comforting, to watch the Ramones going in and out of focus and sync. And Joey Ramone, like TMBGs' John Linnell, was so painfully shy and awkward, but so talented, and in the output, the songwiting, the stage presence, so free.

I'm writing this in a hurry, very late, so I'll have to save the full connection between these two bands in the musical inheritances of 30 to 40 year old punks and artists for another time. Is this blasphemy? Am I full of shit? You decide: PO Box 170291, SF CA 94117.

Ask me about sex, girls, boys, food, growths and discolorations, punk rock, or anything else. I'll be doing an advice column here in *MRR*. Seriously, for real, as soon as I hear some questions that need answers. Write to the address above, or to arwen@maximumrocknroll.com



Biscuit.

Elsewhere in this issue, as well as in countless web, radio, and print forums Randy "Biscuit" Turner, who was most well-known as the singer for the inimitable Texas punk band the Big Boys, is lovingly eulogized by those who knew him best, as well as by those who knew him through—and were touched by—his music and art. They have done an exceptional job in remembering this giant of a man, but I can't let this opportunity go by without paying my own respects.

I learned the tragic news on the night of the discovery of Biscuit's death. It was nearly midnight when my roommate Chris padded downstairs from his room and held up the Big Boys first LP towards me. "Are you trying to tell me that you want to

listen to that?" I asked.

"Biscuit's dead," was his reply.

And sure enough, it was true. As of this writing, many of the details of that death are still unclear, but that is not so important now. What is important is that everywhere I went for days, people had hand made new Big Boys T-shirts for themselves, were listening to Big Boys records, were telling anecdotes of their first introductions to the band or to Biscuit himself. The overall effect of our collective mourning was a sweet, affecting tribute to a man who epitomized so many of the good qualities that punk—and life—has to offer. The truth is, sometimes it's hard to face this cold, unsympathetic world without a chorus of encouragement in our heads. In our dark times, those—like Biscuit—who remind us to simply *live*, and to be ourselves, and (of course) to have fun, fun, fun, go a long way in helping us cope and to maintain our sanity in the face of the steamroller march forward of history. Punk taught me (and continues to remind me) that I can scream at the walls I might hit in my life, but the Big Boys did one better by showing me that I could laugh at those walls and dance, or that I could just thumb my nose at them and walk away. This might not make those barriers disappear, but at least it loosens their grip on our lives and on our hearts.

Part of what made Biscuit such a marvel was that he and the rest of the Big Boys came out of a time and climate—Texas in the late 70s—that could have hardly made it easy to be so cheeky, so irrepressible, so *fierce*. I think to myself, god, how did they do it? Here I am living in San Francisco more than twenty years later, and I'm still struggling with my own idiosyncrasies, all of the little and big ways I don't fit into the real world, or for that matter, the punk world, wondering if I really am just a private person as I like to claim, or if I'm just a little bit afraid being totally *out there*. And there was Biscuit, taping all sorts of weird shit to his clothes, making the craziest art, dancing and skating around in a tutu, not being afraid of anything, helping start one of the most interesting and creative scenes in the history of the American underground. Go start my own band? Thanks Biscuit, don't mind if I do.

War.

I know, I know, it is pretty over the top to call for the assassination of a world leader in public, but the only crime that Pat Robertson has committed in relation to his Washington DC buddies is in having a poorer grasp of public relations. Remember Pat, just paint a pretty little picture of the world and people will be happy to indulge you. Freeze-frame on a newly "free" Gaza strip but don't pan back to show the cordoned off roads, the violently militarized restrictions on mobility, the lack of any sort of self-sufficient infrastructure. Call it a plan for peace, and people will applaud you and leave you be to further institutionalize a profoundly unethical and inhumane set of living conditions. Or, pan right to the newly "free" Iraq, and the face of a country not only ravaged by the effects of a prolonged and increasingly cruel war, but one being rapidly weakened by the spread of diseases that "we" have long overcome. According to some, these are the successes of our illogical and disastrous attitude towards the rest of the world.

Often, it is the supposedly secondary effects of war—be that war overt or covert—that leave the most lasting, heartrending damage. Because the US support of the *mujahedeen* in Afghanistan in the 80s and the counter-revolutionaries in South and Central America was both covert and costly, it was paid for by money made in the Central Asia heroin trade. Much of that heroin was dumped on the poor of Pakistan, which went from having a populace that was negligibly affected by the use of heroin to having a populace with nearly three million heroin addicts, all within the course of the decade. Imagine—this is a country that wasn't even at war! And yet, consider the damage done. What right does anyone have to create that kind of irrevocable human tragedy?

But, you know, it's much easier to turn away from all of it, or even worse, to cluck your tongue and admonish the Pat Robertsons of the world without really taking the time to take stock in the effects of their brazenness.

What do I propose to do about it? I don't know, but you could start by reading a book. A pretty good one, and an admirable attempt to link the Cold War policy of the 80s to the "War on Terrorism" is *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim* by Mahmood Mamdani.

Punk.

Hey, Crow is coming the United States. Incredible! If you are anywhere on the West Coast at the end of September, you should make every effort to come see this powerhouse of a Japanese hardcore band. And they will have new material to boot, their first in quite a long while.

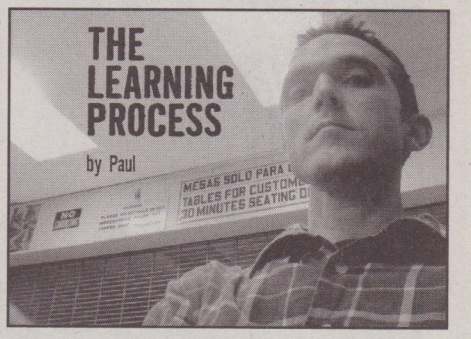
In case you haven't noticed, there have been a lot of excellent DIY punk records lately. I have gushed elsewhere and often about Look Back and Laugh, and I am pretty sure that even without my enthusiasm this band's relentless live performances and incendiary recorded output would have them firmly on top of the hardcore pack, but just in case you need it I will remind you that Look Back and Laugh is probably the best band in the world, their record is probably the best record of the year, and uh...I am prone to hyperbole. But whatever, they rule, OK!

There are some killer young hardcore bands in Austin, TX, which in case you haven't noticed is the new youth mecca of the US punk scene. Namely, Army of Jesus and BSA (aka Bastard Sons of Apocalypse) have impressed me in recent months both with their live performance and their debut EPs. Do pick those up, and do check them out.

And then there is Burial, from Germany, and Martyrdöd, from Sweden whose recent full-length LPs made it onto my year-end top ten within five minutes of the first spin of each record.

Really, there are so many excellent bands out there—and there are new ones cropping up every day—who are not afraid of being interesting, confrontational, DIY, punk. Please support them.

golnar@maximumrocknroll.com



Just a quick column this month, kiddos. I came back from tour with a lot of new energy and ideas. My belief in the viability of DIY is stronger than ever, and I am more pissed off than ever at the idea that you have to compromise your ethics to survive as a punk band (or label, or maybe even as a human being). We played very small all-ages shows, had a small bag full T-shirts that we sold for $3 each, sold our records at barely above cost, and almost all the shows were donation-only (i.e., no one charging at the door, just passing a hat around). And believe it or not, had we not rented a van we would've come out with a hefty profit! Not that that was even the point, but I just don't understand this trend towards charging more at shows, and bands being upset about "illegal" downloading, and the supposed need to sell tons of merch on tour. I know that I can't use my own experience and apply it to everyone, but I do believe that if you do it simply and honestly (in a fuel efficient vehicle!) that touring doesn't have to cost you your morals. Peace out.

I'M NOT SURE - I THINK ITS "SECTION 6" - ITS LIKE A LOOPHOLE IN THE LAW - SOMETHING ABOUT HOW THE ROYAL FAMILY OWNS ALL THE LAND - PROBABLY 20 OR 30 YEARS AGO SOME ONE FOUND A LOOPHOLE IN THE LAW SO ITS LEGAL TO SQUAT ABANDONNED BUILDINGS IN ENGLAND - YOU HAD TO CHANGE THE LOCK & THERE ALWAYS HAD TO BE AN OCCUPANT IN THE BUILDING - ONCE THE OWNER OF THE BUILDING FINDS OUT YOU ARE THERE THEY CAN START THE EVICTION PROCESS WHICH CAN TAKE MONTHS & YOU CAN RESIST SO IT CAN REALLY DRAG OUT - I WAS THERE FROM MAY 2K4 TO NOVEMBER 2K4 - I WAS SQUATTING ALL OVER LONDON - THE FIRST SQUAT I STAYED IN WAS IN KENTISH TOWN & IT WAS NEAR A SOCIAL CENTRE THAT THE WOMBLES DID - (THE WOMBLES ARE AN ANARCHIST COLLECTIVE IN LONDON - THEY DO ALOT OF EUROPEAN DIRECT ACTION) THERE WERE JUNKIES LIVING ON ONE FLOOR - IT WAS A BIG BUILDING & THERE WAS A LOT OF TENSION - THERE WERE SOME GUYS IN THEIR 60'S STILL SQUATTING - & THERE WAS ME & MY FRIEND FROM ST. LOUIS - WE WERE THERE FOR ABOUT A MONTH THEN IT WAS EVICTED & MADE HEADLINES - THERE WERE ABOUT 300 COPS - THE COPS THERE DONT CARRY GUNS SO IT WAS ALMOST COURTEOUS COMPARED TO AMERICAN COPS ☆→

☆ - THEY WERE JUST STANDING OVER ME AT 5AM SAYING "C'MON THEN, LETS GO" - THEN I STAYED AT ARCHWAY SQUAT - AN ABANDONNED THEATRE NEAR KENTISH TOWN - MY FRIEND RAFA FROM CALI WAS LIVING THERE - EVENTUALLY I HITCHED TO POLAND & LIVED IN THE MOUNTAINS NEAR KRAKOW IN AN ABANDONNED WWI BUNKER WITH SOME AMAZING PEOPLE - THERES ALOT OF DRUGS IN POLAND - THEY ARE PROUD THAT HITLER USED POLISH SPEED BEFORE HIS SPEECHES (MAYBE YOU SHOULDNT PUT THAT - IT MIGHT BE OFFENSIVE) EVEN IN LONDON POLISH SPEED IS PRETTY POPULAR - NOW I'M LIVING IN THE SOUTH BRONX DOING HIP HOP & I'M POSSESSED BY THE GHOST OF OL' DIRTY BASTARD ×

FLY: 06/16/2K5

AZR aka Ghost Of Dirty - 06/16/2K5 - NYC

I met AZR at a screening of the PEOPs show that i did at Fountain House in NYC - it was organized by the Icarus Project (www.theicarusproject.net) - anyway - AZR came to it & he asked me to do some art for his upcoming hip hop cd - he didnt want me to give out his email address if you want to contact fly email fly@bway.net (put MRR in the subject so i know its not spam)

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MRR NEWS

MRR NEWS FOR ISSUE #269 COMPILED BY GOLNAR NIKPOUR

US ENDURES DEADLIEST YEAR IN AFGHANISTAN

By Bryan Bender, from an article in *The Globe*

This year has been the deadliest for US troops in Afghanistan since war began in late 2001, as more American soldiers have died than in each of the previous three years, according to military figures.

The statistics signal that well-armed Taliban and al-Qaeda militants holed up in caves, tribal villages, and craggy peaks along the border with Pakistan will remain a threat to the new Afghan government for years and require US troops, now numbering 18,000, to remain indefinitely, according to regional specialists.

In the first half of this year, at least 54 Americans lost their lives, compared with 52 in all of last year, according to official statistics reviewed by the Globe. The number of overall casualties, which saw an upsurge with the shootdown of a US military helicopter and the potential loss of a reconnaissance team in eastern Afghanistan last week, have edged up every year since Operation Enduring Freedom began after the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, the figures show.

Many of the recent US deaths have been caused by more deadly improvised explosive devices, the roadside bombs that also have been the weapon of choice for insurgents targeting American troops in Iraq, according to US commanders. Six Americans were killed by such bombs last month alone. Officials and specialists said all indications point to substantial support for the Afghan and foreign fighters from sympathetic tribes and government officials next door in lawless western Pakistan.

"The upsurge is disturbing," said James Dobbins, director of the International Security and Defense Policy Center at the government-funded Rand Corp. and President Bush's former special envoy to Afghanistan. "It is surprising. People thought the trends were more favorable. It suggests that the US is not going to be able to phase out any time soon or significantly reduce its troop presence."

Indeed, with national elections planned for September, senior Pentagon officials say they are considering a temporary increase in US forces to respond to recent attacks on the new Afghan government and a series of brazen assaults on US military forces. The US Central Command, responsible for operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, has not yet asked for additional troops, the officials said last week.

But many officers and outside experts believe they will be needed to ensure the violence is kept in check while Afghanistan's political progress moves ahead. On Tuesday, militants armed with a rocket-propelled grenade downed a US helicopter in the mountainous border region with Pakistan, killing all 16 Special Forces soldiers who were aboard, according to a preliminary investigation. The Navy SEALS and Army special operations commandos were on a mission to aid a small reconnaissance team that had been battling with Taliban and al-Qaeda fighters in the area and is now missing.

Taliban spokesmen have claimed credit for shooting down the helicopter and say they have captured a US soldier and killed seven American "spies." The information could not be verified and an intensive search of the area by hundreds of US troops was underway for the second day yesterday.

Also, in a three-day assault that ended Friday, 25 people were killed when Taliban fighters attacked two police stations and a nearby village in southeastern Afghanistan, the spiritual heartland of the former ruling Taliban regime, including nine tribal elders, the provincial governor in Uruzgan province told the Associated Press.

Military officials and Afghan specialists say the rise in attacks is partly because of a more aggressive US and Afghan strategy to flush out remaining pockets of Taliban fighters and their Al Qaeda allies who used Afghanistan as a training base throughout the 1990s. In the first year of the US occupation, the United States maintained a military presence of only about 8,000 troops; it now has 18,000 troops and has expanded the number of patrols and community reconstruction teams to more remote areas where the Taliban is believed to operate.

Other contributing factors cited for the increase in attacks are the spring thaw in the Hindu Kush mountains, increased pressure by US forces and the Afghan government on the booming heroin trade, and unrest about the upcoming national elections

Still, military officers, aid workers, and Afghan officials agree that "the fact is that there is more violence," said Robert M. Perito, a senior fellow at the US Institute of Peace, who returned from Afghanistan last week. "The overriding story I heard is that the security is worse this spring than it was a year ago," Perito said. "There are more attacks and they are better organized, more lethal, and widespread."

The tactics have taken their toll. In the past three months, 29 US troops have been killed, including the 16 in last week's helicopter attack, the deadliest since US forces invaded on Oct. 7, 2001. This year is already the deadliest for US troops. Before 52 troops died last year, 47 soldiers were killed in 2003 and 43 in 2002. From October to December 2001, 12 US military personnel were killed.

As the United States considers increasing troops, there are already plans to send additional NATO troops before the September elections and thousands more next year to help fight the insurgency in the eastern and southern parts of Afghanistan, where the violence is most pronounced. Britain, Canada, Norway, and others, which began policing the relatively stable northern and western parts of the Texas-sized country in May, will work alongside the Americans.

"I don't know if you could talk about a Taliban resurgence," Perito said. "They never went away. We'll be doing counterinsurgency for the foreseeable future."

UTAH TELEVISION STATION CENSORS ANTI-WAR AD

(AP)

A Utah television station is refusing to air an anti-war ad featuring Cindy Sheehan, whose son's death in Iraq prompted a vigil outside President George W. Bush's Texas ranch. Also, a patriotic camp with a "God Bless Our President!" banner sprung up in downtown Crawford, Texas Saturday, countering the anti-war demonstration started by Sheehan. The camp is named "Fort Qualls," in memory of Marine Lance Cpl. Louis Wayne Qualls, 20, who died in Iraq last fall.

The anti-war ad began airing on other Salt Lake City-area stations Saturday, two days before Bush was scheduled to speak in Salt Lake City to the national convention of the Veterans of Foreign Wars.

However, a national sales representative for KTVX, a local ABC affiliate, rejected the ad in an email to media buyers, writing that it was an "inappropriate commercial advertisement for Salt Lake City."

In the ad, Sheehan pleads with Bush for a meeting and accuses him of lying to the American people about Iraq's development of weapons of mass destruction and its connection to al-Qaeda.

"I love my country. But how many more of our loved ones need to die in this senseless war?" a weary-looking Sheehan asks in the ad. "I know you can't bring Casey back. But it's time to admit mistakes and bring our troops home now." The ads were bought by Gold Star Families for Peace, co-founded by Sheehan.

Salt Lake City affiliates of NBC, CBS, and Fox began running the ad Saturday.

In a statement Saturday evening explaining its decision, KTVX said that after viewing the ad, local managers found the content "could very well be offensive to our community in Utah, which has contributed more than its fair share of fighting soldiers and suffered significant loss of life in the this Iraq war."

Bush carried nearly 70 percent of the vote last fall in Utah, one of the most conservative states north of the so-called Bible Belt.

Station General Manager David D'Antuono said the decision was not influenced by the station's owner, Clear Channel Communications Inc.

Celeste Zappala, who with Sheehan co-founded Gold Star Families for Peace, said she was puzzled by the decision.

"What stunned me was that it was inappropriate to hear this message," she said. "How is it that Salt Lake City should hear no questions about the war?"

The email read: "The viewpoints reflected in the spot are incompatible with our marketplace and will not be well received by our viewers." It added that the spot didn't qualify as an issue advertisement.

For the ad to have been considered an "issue" advertisement a ballot measure would have had to be at stake, D'Antuono said.

Mark Wiest, vice president of sales for NBC-affiliated KSL television, said that in the interest of freedom of speech, his station didn't hesitate to run the ad. KSL is owned by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

"The bigger picture is, by suppressing the message are we doing what is right under the First Amendment and in an open democratic society?" Wiest said.

Salt Lake City's Mayor Rocky Anderson used email this week to call for "the biggest demonstration this state has ever seen," when President Bush appears at the convention Monday.

Anderson says Bush policies are disastrous for the country and that to stay quiet during the president's visit would be send a message of apathy.

The mayor's email called for a collaboration of health care advocates, seniors, gay and lesbian advocates, anti-Patriot advocates, civil libertarians, and anti-war folks to protest outside the VFW convention.

Mike Parkin, senior vice commander of a VFW post in Salt Lake City, says the move makes Anderson look unpatriotic.

The Vietnam vet, who says he voted for Anderson, but won't again, says the protest will offend veterans and embolden enemies of the US.

In Crawford, Gary Qualls, the father of a slain soldier, explained his reasons for supporting the pro-war camp. "If I have to sacrifice my whole family for the sake of our country and world, other countries that want freedom, I'll do that," said Qualls, who is friends with the local business owner who started the camp. He said his 16-year-old son now wants to enlist, and he supports that decision.

Qualls' frustration with the anti-war demonstrators erupted last week when he removed a cross bearing his son's name that was among hundreds the group had put up along the road to Bush's ranch.

Qualls called the protesters' views disrespectful to soldiers, and said he had to yank out two more crosses after protesters kept replacing them.

VIOLENT ENVIRONMENTAL PROTESTS AT CHINESE PLANT

from *Reuters*

Saturday's violence at the Tian Neng Battery Co. was also the third protest in the eastern province of Zhejiang in recent months caused by pollution, highlighting the environmental price of China's rise to become the world's seventh-largest economy.

"It's very serious. There was a clash between protesters and the police. Some people were injured," said an employee of the post office in the county of Meishan who declined to be identified.

"Some children died of lead pollution and the demonstration might have been initiated by the parents."

Calls to the factory went unanswered and an official at the county government said he had not heard of any violence. But a police officer in Meishan acknowledged there had been a protest, saying police had rushed to the scene to maintain order. She refused to give further details. Residents said children were falling ill from high levels of lead that had poisoned water and vegetables in several villages in the area.

"A lot of children in our area have too much lead in their bodies and it will greatly affect their growth," said a receptionist at a Meishan hotel surnamed Han.

"People burnt the factory. The office building, workshops, and the factory's products were all set on fire," she said.

Four police cars had also been set alight, she said, adding there was heavy security presence in the area and police were rounding up suspects. Protests in China are becoming increasingly common despite leaders' obsession with maintaining stability, triggered by factors from pollution and corruption to a growing gap between rich and poor.

The Ministry of Public Security has been quoted as saying there were more than 74,000 protests last year alone and the government has warned the wealth gap could be the cause of yet more unrest if no action is taken to narrow the difference.

A team from the Ministry of Labor and Social Security found the wealth gap had been widening since 2003 despite measures to increase incomes among the rural poor, including scrapping agricultural taxes, the China Daily newspaper said on Monday.

"We are going to hit the red-light scenario after 2010 if there are no effective solutions," the newspaper quoted ministry researcher Su Hainan as saying.

Although China is the world's fastest-growing major economy, the ministry team found rural incomes last year averaged only about $355, less than a third of urban incomes. The Ministry of Civil Affairs has said some 26 million rural Chinese live in absolute poverty, earning less than $80 a year.

"The government's top priority is to make those farmers still in poverty earn more," the report said.

STATE GOVERNORS SHARPEN ATTACKS ON OPPRESSED IMMIGRANTS

by Alex Gould

On Friday August 12, Arizona governor Bill Richardson, a Democrat, declared a state of emergency in the counties bordering Mexico. On Monday, Janet Napolitano, the Democratic governor of Arizona, declared a similar emergency in her state. The California legislature is debating a similar declaration. Richardson, a silver-spooned son of the Citibank empire who likes to show off his Spanish when courting the "latino vote," is a likely candidate for president in 2008. Napoletano is a liberal former state prosecutor who supports the racist death penalty.

Usually associated with disasters such as floods and earthquakes, these state of emergency declarations are being issued to get 3.25 million dollars in federal funds to increase the militarized policing of the US-Mexico border. There are already 11,000 federal border patrol agents employed by the Department of Homeland Security on the Mexican border. The armed border agents are supplied with helicopters and other military equipment such as night-vision aids and remote video sensors.

Kevin Krolicki reported for Reuters on August 18 that Richardson had also asked the Mexican government to bulldoze the Mexican border town of Las Chepas, because it is a departure point for many immigrants. What colossal arrogance!

The Border Patrol agents are joined by a growing military presence. US Army and Marines troops are on the ground and in the air menacing the migrant workers who cross the border daily. The current military deployment on the border began in 1981 as part of Reagan's "war on drugs," and was expanded by President Clinton to become a war on immigrant workers. All included, police and troops of at least 15 federal, state, and local agencies are involved in this border conflict.

The border mobilization targets migrant workers from Mexico and other Latin American countries who are fleeing poverty and wars for opportunities in the United States. The effect of this million-dollar racist hunting expedition is deadly for the migrants who cross the desert regions of California, Arizona, New Mexico and Texas. The US border patrol reported 325 deaths of immigrants on the Mexico border in 2004, primarily by heat stroke, dehydration, and hypothermia. Migrants are also shot at with impunity by ranchers, and are now threatened by racist paramilitary gangs of "minutemen" and their imitators.

These deaths are entirely preventable and are caused by the criminalization and harassment of Chicano and Latino workers. They put the lie to the governors' insinuations of criminality and aggression by the migrants. If these states of emergency were truly being declared in the interest of public safety, Richardson and Napolitano would use the funds to deploy medics, translators, and guides to help the immigrants cross safely, not more sheriff's deputies.

Attacking immigrants and encouraging racism for political advantage will not reduce unemployment or bring back industries that have relocated to US neocolonies in Latin America for lower wages. It won't stop the cutbacks to Medicaid and social security, it won't lower gas prices or rents, and it won't make higher education and job training affordable. But it does produce a layer of super exploited workers in the United States who, lacking the legal protections of citizens and the solidarity of their white-skinned fellow workers, can be paid less, worked longer hours, and denied their union rights.

This division is the basis of the bosses' two-faced attitude toward Latino immigrant workers. Industries such as agriculture, meat processing, construction and tourism would not survive a day without the labor of legal and undocumented immigrants. For this reason the border militarization and the new vigilante gangs are not aimed at stopping immigration. Immigration is inevitable when the capitalist market and technology spans the globe, creating intense inequality and misery in the less developed countries. The workers and farmhands of the US southwest are not beset by a Latino immigrant crisis, they are threatened by a millionaire white man crisis called capitalism. Unity across racial and national lines is needed to overcome this crisis and its symptoms—poverty, war, and disease. The racist demagoguery of Richardson and Napolitano is aimed at preventing this unity.

REST IN PEACE: JOHN LODER

Southern Records founder John Loder passed away on Saturday, August 13th. His work recording and distributing punk rock and his passion for the music and ethics of the punk scene will be sorely missed. His longtime collaborators at Dischord Records have issued the following statement:

On August 13th we lost our dear friend and business partner, John Loder. John ran Southern Studios in London and has worked with Dischord for the past twenty-one years overseeing the manufacturing and distribution of many of our releases. Without John and Southern, Dischord would have never been able to have done so much in that time.

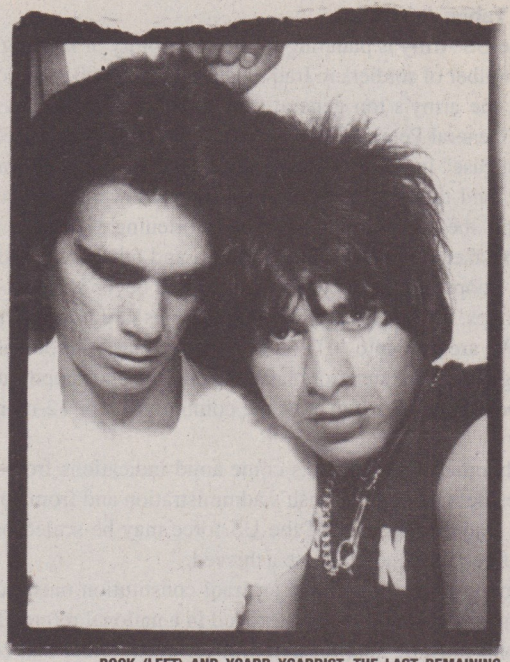
While his brilliance with computers and distribution was unquestionable, John's first and foremost love was music. He operated a studio out of a garage behind his house in the Wood Green neighborhood in London and recorded a number of Dischord releases there including Fugazi's Margin Walker *EP in 1988 (these songs appear on the* 13 Songs *CD). He also engineered and produced records for Crass and bands that appeared on their label, Corpus Christi, as well as many others including Subhumans, Babes in Toyland, Shellac, Ministry, PJ Harvey, and The Jesus and Marychain.*

John spent the last year battling the effects of a serious seizure caused by a brain tumor, but his condition worsened in the last month. He died peacefully and with loved ones early Saturday morning.

REST IN PEACE: ROCK HALSEY

—Stuart Schrader

I'm saddened to report that Rock Halsey, singer of ROCK BOTTOM & THE SPYS, was murdered in prison on August 10, 2005, in his thirteenth year of a twenty-five-year sentence. Though Rock was not the most well-known of punks, he was one of the true originals, who lived on the edge of society and played kick-ass rocknroll. Rock's music was rescued from obscurity by the appearance of two songs from the band's lone 45 on *Killed by Death* #14. Collectors' frantic search to find copies of the record turned up a whole lot of sad tales—two of the band members were dead already and a third would commit suicide not long after collectors Roger Mah and Ryan Richardson had spoken to him—and almost no vinyl. To this day, the record remains one of the absolute rarest in punk history. Luckily, Richardson reissued the EP in 2002 and some copies included a full-color reproduction of a planned (but never issued) picture sleeve designed by SPYS bassist Blank Frank for the original release. The reissue pressing of 500 copies sold out within a couple months. Ryan befriended Rock and corresponded with him frequently for six years and encouraged others to do the same by including Rock's prison address on the reissue insert. In a review of the reissue, I wrote, "Is it possible that one record could be the best punk rock, synth punk, and hardcore record of all time? Until I heard this one, I'd thought not, but ROCK BOTTOM & THE SPYS provides the angriest, snarling, hard-to-the-core, synth-based punk rock I've ever heard." The only known original mention of the band in print, in *Slash*, said they sought a synth player: "Only those with a taste for danger need apply." Unfortunately for these punks, it seems danger found them. Whereas a lot of latter-day punk bands affect a pose of antisocial behavior, ROCK BOTTOM & THE SPYS, for better or worse (mostly worse, I guess), lived it. Lyrics to "No Good" read: "Cops have got me branded / They got my prints / Your fucking world / I think it stinks / I'll take my hand in / put it in your eye / I'll take my knife / and cut you up to die." I encourage you to read the astonishing story of the band at: www.breakmyface.com/bands/rockbottom.html



ROCK (LEFT) AND YGARR YGARRIST, THE LAST REMAINING SPY, WHO ALSO PLAYED IN ZOLAR X.

MONSANTO SEEKS PATENTS ON BREEDING

By Brian Thomas Fitzgerald
from www.nyc.indymedia.org

It's official. Monsanto Corporation is out to corner the world's food supply as they pig-headedly set about hog-tying farmers with their monopoly plans. Not content to control the patents on pesticides, herbicides and genetically modified seeds, the corporate giant has made a move toward the barnyard in an attempt to own that most famous Monsanto invention—the pig.

Christoph Then, a Greenpeace researcher who monitors patent applications, recently uncovered a move by the multinational corporation to patent not only certain methods of breeding, but also the resulting herds of pigs themselves. The patent applications were published in February of 2005 by the World Intellectual Property Organization in Geneva.

"If these patents are granted, Monsanto can legally prevent breeders and farmers from breeding pigs whose characteristics are described in the patent claims, or force them to pay royalties," said Then. "It's a first step toward the same kind of corporate control of an animal line that Monsanto is aggressively pursuing with various grain and vegetable lines."

Various parts of the applications rely on phrases such as "a pig offspring," "a pig herd," "a pig population," and "a swine herd" in describing what the company is attempting to patent. Should the applications be approved, the requests would essentially give ownership of the pigs, their offspring and the use of their genetic information for breeding purposes to Monsanto. Aside from fines, infringement of the patent could even result in imprisonment for offenders.

"Monsanto isn't just seeking a patent for the method, they are seeking a patent on the actual pigs which are bred from this method," said Then. "It's an astoundingly broad and dangerous claim."

Other portions of the patent are vague in description. In one patent application Monsanto describes very general methods of crossbreeding and selection that rely on artificial insemination and other breeding methods already in use. The main "invention" is nothing more than a particular combination of these elements designed to speed the breeding cycle for specific traits.

Monsanto hopes to use such methods to make the animals more commercially profitable. The multinational notes that, "The economic impact of the industry in rural America is immense. Annual farm sales typically exceed $1 billion USD, while the retail value of pork sold to consumers reaches $38 billion USD each year."

In the last ten years Monsanto has spent about $10 billion buying up seed producers and companies in other sectors of the agricultural business. By claiming global monopoly patent rights throughout the entire food chain, Monsanto seeks to make farmers and food producers, and ultimately consumers, entirely dependent and reliant on one single corporate entity for a basic human need.

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US TROOPS MAY STAY IN IRAQ "UNTIL 2009"

from Yahoo Australia

The US Army is planning for the possibility of keeping the current number of soldiers in Iraq—well over 100,000—for four more years, the army's top general said. In an *Associated Press* interview, General Peter Schoomaker said the army is prepared for the "worst case" in terms of the required level of troops in Iraq.

He said the number could be adjusted lower, if called for, by slowing the force rotation or by shortening tours for soldiers. Schoomaker said commanders in Iraq and others will decide how many troops will be needed next year and beyond. About 138,000 US troops, including about 25,000 marines, are now in Iraq.

"We are now into '07-'09 in our planning," Schoomaker said, having completed work on the set of combat and support units that will be rotated into Iraq over the coming year for 12-month tours of duty.

Schoomaker's comments come amid indications from officials of President George W Bush's administration and from commanders in Iraq that the size of the US force may be scaled back next year if certain conditions are achieved.

Among those conditions: an Iraqi constitution must be drafted in coming days; it must be approved in a national referendum; and elections must be held for a new government under that charter.

Schoomaker, who spoke aboard an army jet on the trip to Washington from Kansas City, Missouri, made no predictions about the pace of political progress in Iraq. But he said he was confident the army could continue to provide the current number of forces to fight the insurgency for many more years. He was in Kansas City for a dinner hosted by the Military Order of the World Wars, a veterans' organization.

"We're staying 18 months to two years ahead of ourselves" in planning which active-duty and National Guard and Reserve units will be provided to meet the commanders' needs, Schoomaker said in the interview.

The army has changed the way it arranges troop rotations. Instead of sending a full complement of replacement forces each 12-month cycle, it is stretching out the rotation over two years. The current rotation, for 2005-07, will overlap with the 2006-08 replacements. Beyond that, the army is piecing together the plan for the 2007-09 switch, Schoomaker said.

With the recent deployments of National Guard brigades from Georgia and Pennsylvania, the National Guard has seven combat brigades in Iraq—the most of the entire war—plus thousands of support troops.

Along with the Army Reserve and Marine Reserve, they account for about 40 per cent of the US forces in Iraq. Schoomaker said that will be scaled back next year to about 25 per cent as newly expanded active-duty divisions such as the 101st Airborne enter the rotation.

This has been the deadliest month of the war for the National Guard and Reserve, with at least 42 fatalities so far.

REST IN PEACE: DIXON COULBOURN

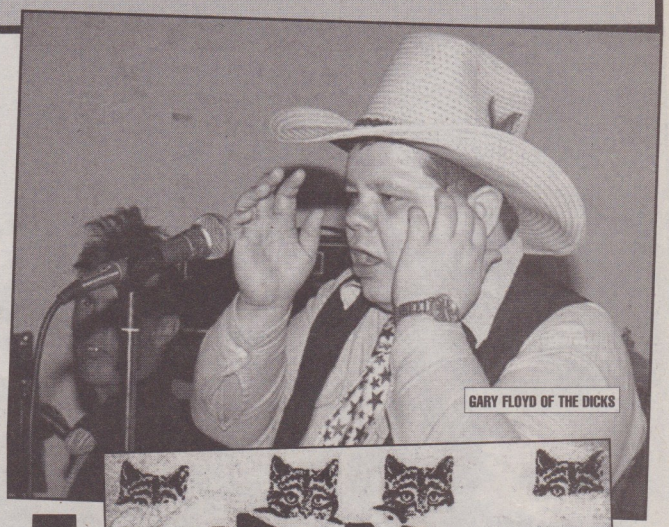
Dixon Coulbourn, esteemed punk photographer, zine editor, and ardent adherent to the DIY ethos passed away on July 31st in his Austin home in a swimming pool accident. His photographs of legendary Texas bands the Dicks, MDC, and especially the Big Boys have become legends unto themselves. The following is excerpted from Dixon's website (www.idletimearchive.com), where you can also find a number of his photos and zines archived.

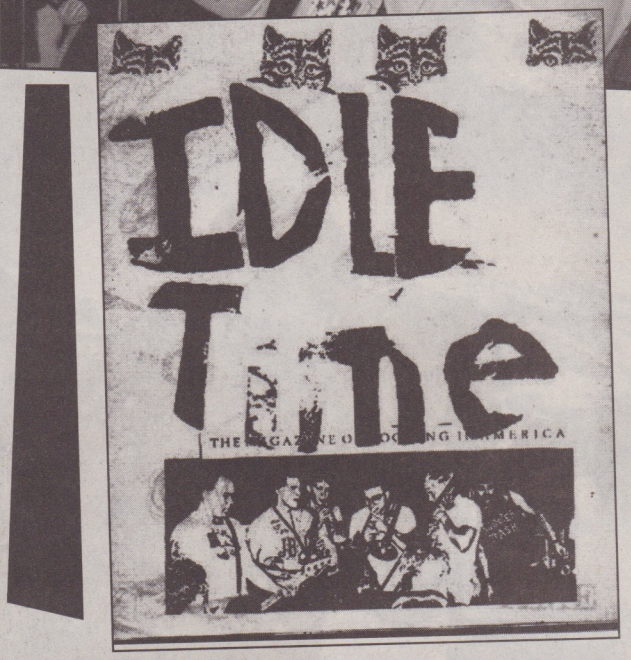
"Within a week of moving into the dorm, I started a 'zine called *Idle Time*. It was a way to stay connected to the Austin scene—it was my love letter home. I made the long trip down I-75 and I-35 to Austin quite often, catching rides with friends or strangers or taking the Greyhound Bus, making pilgrimages to Raul's and Duke's Royal Coach Inn. But I also met the only other punk on campus—who just happened to have a car—so we'd make the much shorter trip to Dallas' Hot Klub to see touring bands like Mo-Dettes, Ultravox, and the Stranglers."

I'd been a photographer since the age of nine, I think, when my grandmother gave me an ancient box camera, a very primitive thing. I graduated from that to an Instamatic, then to a 35mm Yashica Rangefinder, and later to a Pentax K100 SLR. But I'd never taken my camera to Raul's, until I started *Idle Time*. I was a DIY journalist and photographer now. The first time I took my camera to Raul's was when the Psychedelic Furs came through on their first US tour, when hardly anyone had heard of them.

But from then on, I quite often had my camera at shows. I had a job to do. The Big Boys were especially supportive of my efforts; they made me feel like part of the scene, like I was contributing something. They were good that way. Very inclusive in what sometimes felt like an exclusive scene.

Idle Time was my main creative outlet. I loved cutting and pasting, the rub-on letters, typewritten or handwritten text, rubber cement, the whole DIY thing. It was sloppy and fun. I was never a perfectionist. I wish I'd been a little more careful about focus and exposure—but I didn't care then; any photo I took was just going to be photocopied anyway, so what the hell. It was just part of the collage that was *Idle Time*. I wasn't really thinking about the possibility of the photos being published 20 years later in a Real Magazine."

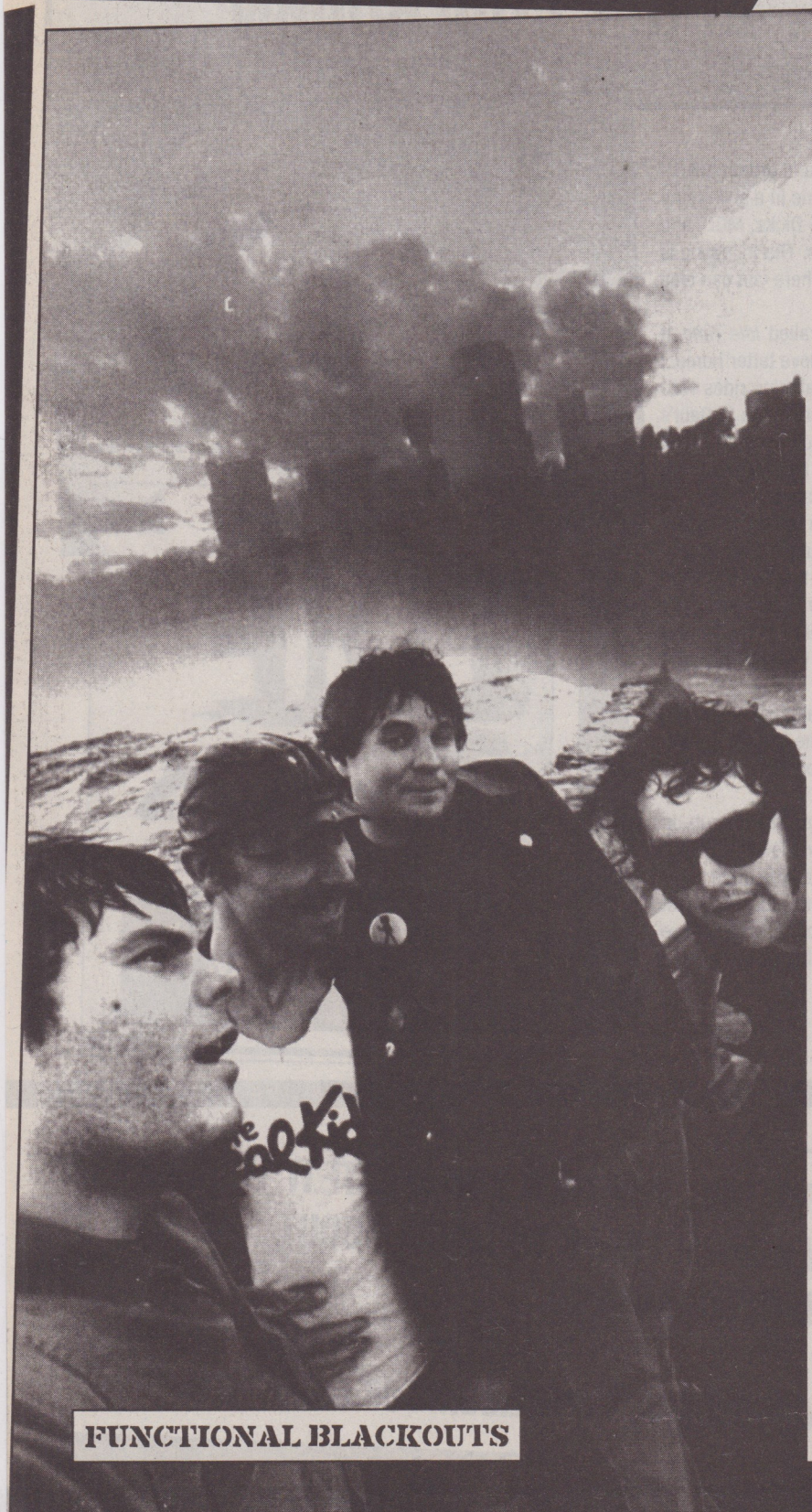

GARY FLOYD OF THE DICKS



HEY PUNK!! YOU CAN SUBMIT NEWS TOO! WHETHER YOU WROTE IT YOURSELF OR JUST THINK IT'S SOMETHING OTHER PUNKS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT, WE HERE AT MAXIMUMROCKNROLL WANT YOUR NEWS ARTICLE.

PLEASE CONTACT MRR@MAXIMUMROCKNROLL.COM FOR MORE INFO.

CHICAGO



FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS

Chicago deserves to burn with this rejuvenated sense of scene/subgenre cooperation we are currently experiencing. Factionalism that once existed within hardcore subgenres (often crust vs. melodic [sometimes humorous] hardcore vs. metalcore and straightedge), between hardcore and trashy garage punk 'n' roll, and between geographical affiliations (Northside vs. Southside), as well as punk generation gaps to a certain extent, is declining. People are seeing more commonalities and sharing more DIY resources. The current Chicago climate is hot and it reminds me, in some ways, of the early to mid eighties when hardcore bands, noise bands, and some garage punk and power pop bands would share bills.

There are many factors at play contributing to this scene renaissance, including last year's end of all-ages punk/hardcore/metal/ska/noise/emo shows at the Fireside Bowl forcing many to share DIY spaces, but this scene would be weaker if it weren't for the superhuman efforts of three record labels that also set up all ages shows and broadcast punk programs on the same community radio station and the blazing creative ambitions of bands that want to develop their sounds further without abandoning the DIY ethic.

I will give you a report, which of course can't be all inclusive due to space limits and not knowing everyone from every diverse scene, that will penetrate the occult forces at work mesmerizing rock starved and schlock shelled cretins locally and globally.

CRIMINAL IQ RECORDS (www.criminaliq.com or criminaliq@hotmail.com) was hatched by two veterans of 28 years or so of punk evolution/de-evolution: Darius, an Englishman who dates back to the UKs early 80s anarcho/CRASS scene, among other things, and Jon who has managed THE EFFIGIES and does www.windycity-punk.com. They have issued many recordings, including the *Maybe Chicago* compilation, of bands that a few years ago would've been lumped together as garage. Many of the bands on their roster are more interesting than the over hyped garage debris that big critics pushed. What follows is a list of bands on or associated with the label. The MANHANDLERS have become, over four years, a ferocious femme fatal flamethrower onstage;

they play tighter and with agility without playing up the sex kitten shtick. The KRUNCHIES also play tight and fierce especially on their latest release, *In De Winkle*. Some compare them to early 80s anarcho punk with male and female vocals (think DIRT and their peers) but despite their glorious m/f vocal screechings I think they have more in common with THE FEEDERZ, which is a band we mutually admire that also uses a clean guitar tone to sharpen their songs and points. THE ROTTEN FRUITS a queer band with attitude, is giving the new pope plenty of sleepless nights with their *Abomination* 7" EP. Mark, who used to set up fun 90s Homocore shows with friend Johanna, in THE ROTTEN FRUITS. Their front man Germ, however, has caused controversy and some erections with his pedigree from the Lee Ving/Blag Dahlia/Nazi Dog/GG Allin School Of Charm. The FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS continue to freak out as they all sing now and fool around with effects box filtered vocals (their former frontman Brian Nervous left them to become Mike Love's replacement in THE BEACH BOYS) and now have as much in common with early DEVO as they do THE ELECTRIC EELS, THE GERMS, *Killed By Death* obscuros, etc. The FBs have new vinyl on Wrench and an LP out on Criminal IQ Later this year. The MASTERS OF THE OBVIOUS or MOTO, for those with shorter attention spans, has power popped punk since the mid 80s in various forms including as a male and female duo before it was trendy. Frontman Paul Caporino still creates infectious rocking humdingers that are probably Top 40 AM radio hits in another parallel universe; Criminal IQ has helped this often overlooked, until recent years, outfit get more deserved attention. I ATTACK has a new release coming out soon on Criminal IQ and they still continue to rock in an 80s skate punk vein minus the trebly, yet still cool and rare these days, approach of JFA or some BIG BOYS songs but with a chunkier guitar sound (thanks in part to LOS CRUDOS veteran Jose). Rob acts as their front man/philosopher/rascal and will try to skate over your indifferent face if you stand close to the stage. Criminal IQ are also helping The EFFIGIES (the original line up minus Earl on guitar) put out a new LP. The EFFIGIES have been playing some reunion shows with younger local bands in and out of town since last year and still can deliver the goods.

South Kore Records (www.southkorerecords.com) consists of, in my opinion, the largely Latin Southside neighborhoods Pilsen and Little Village have been breeding some of the best straight forward hardcore bands since LOS CRUDOS roamed the Earth (Hi Martin!). SouthKore Records has done a lot to get this scene out to the rest of the world. They have released, among other things, the Chicago compilation *Ratas de Ciudad* ("City Rats"), a recent seven-inch by THE PEDESTRIANS, who play a choppy driving 70s/early 80s punk style, an EP by up and coming hardcore juggernaut ESKE which pummels live in a vein similar to NEGATIVE APPROACH and other Midwest pioneers, and an EP by NO SLOGAN, which fuses mid-tempo hardcore with melodic elements of NAKED RAYGUN, ARTICLES OF FAITH, BHOPAL STIFFS, THE EFFIGIES, etc. And with Benny's dynamic vocals and his mother's fine tamales, you can't go wrong. A newer band to watch for is CONDENADA, which includes Mariam, formerly of thick crust HUMAN ORDER, and Megan, formerly of REACCION. These ladies play mid-tempo, 80s sounding hardcore driven by impressive drumming from Trish. All of these bands play out as much as suburban tribute bands. Even after seeing them numerous times, they still deliver high levels of intensity and sincerity that escapes what would be generic in others hands.

UNDERGROUND COMMUNIQUE (www.undercomm.org): This is the story of two cats named Justin that did a show in the late 90s on WLUW called *The Government Music Show*. They started the Government Music label but one Justin decided to leave the airwaves and the label so the other renamed the show *Underground Communiqué* and started a new label with that name too. Justin 2, along with WLUW's excellent sound engineer Chris, have been

specializing in melodic hardcore from the likes of HAUNTED LIFE and SHOT BAKER who have been building their reputation from their shows and songs influenced by NAKED RAYGUN and other anthemic punk. They, like Criminal IQ, have been doing both large venue shows (such as at the Logan Square Auditorium which fits 600 or more people) and smaller spaces. I'll discuss more about them under radio.

Bands

THE BASEBALL FURIES and THE TYRADES (tyrades99@hotmail.com) were both refugees from Buffalo, NY who realized there was more promise in the land of pork chop sandwiches and Svengoolie (a local horror/sci-fi/fantasy TV movie host with years of hilarious skits and song parodies). Both bands share a member in Jimmy Hollywood, who plays nice, trebly, abrasive guitar, and engineers and produces. Both bands have developed their sound beyond subgenre expectations or their early explosions. THE BASEBALL FURIES started playing faster and rougher but on their *Let It Be* CD they have added subtlety and dynamics without abandoning the rock. THE TYRADES have tapped into sublime surreal nightmarish dimensions with newer songs like *I Want To Be Your Video* and *I Am Homicide* that CHROME and few others tripped on. THE TYRADES make you want to smash up surveillance cameras; I can imagine armies of roving naked shriners on PCP ravaging the Mall Of America to THE TYRADES.

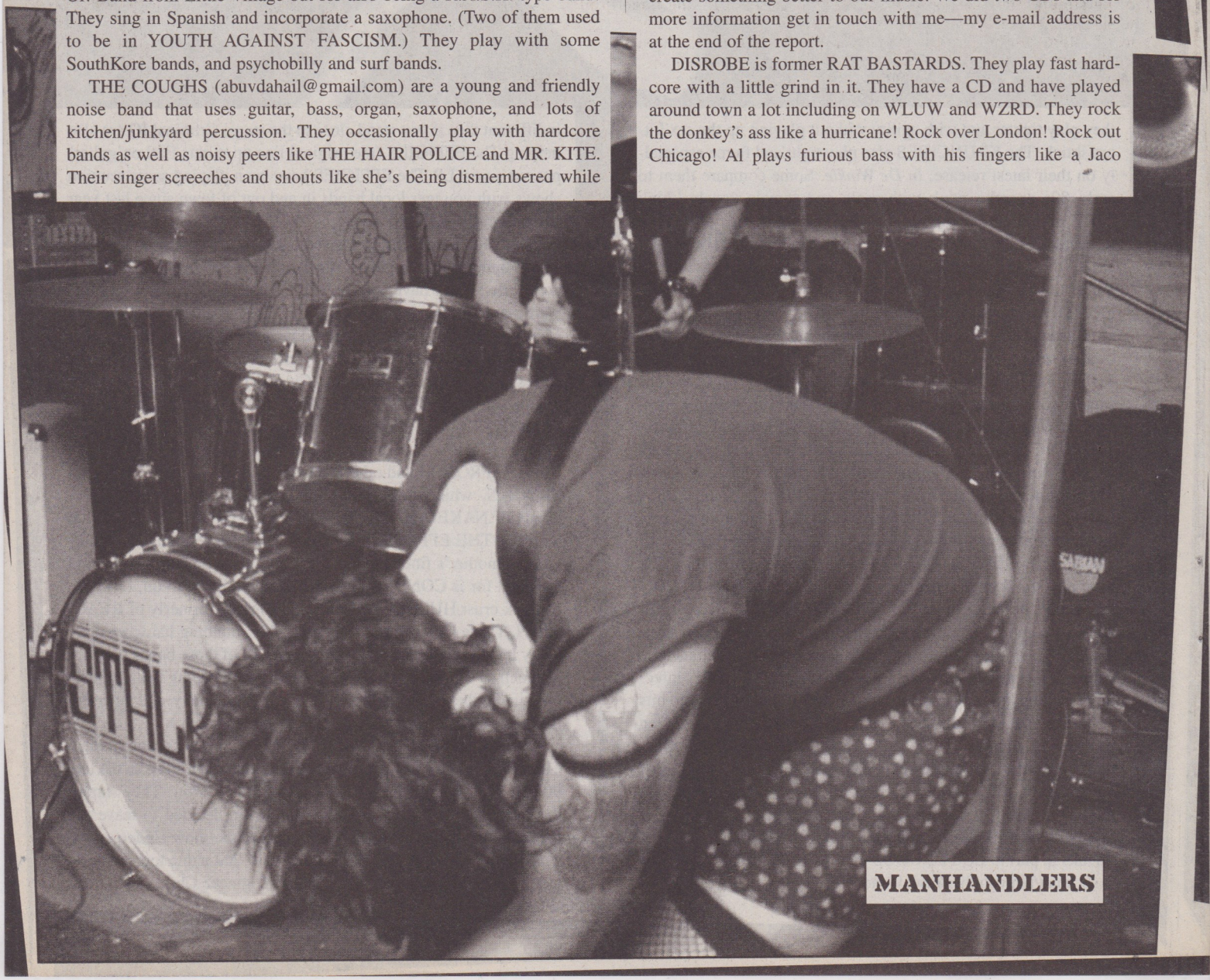
PK DORES receive the trophy of honor for not only being the only Oi! Band from Little Village but for also being a R.A.S.H. type band! They sing in Spanish and incorporate a saxophone. (Two of them used to be in YOUTH AGAINST FASCISM.) They play with some SouthKore bands, and psychobilly and surf bands.

THE COUGHS (abuvdahail@gmail.com) are a young and friendly noise band that uses guitar, bass, organ, saxophone, and lots of kitchen/junkyard percussion. They occasionally play with hardcore bands as well as noisy peers like THE HAIR POLICE and MR. KITE. Their singer screeches and shouts like she's being dismembered while the band builds cacophony till it crashes down on the audience.

GENTLEMAN JOHN BATTLE (chicagobattles@comcast.net): Some fools may try to pigeonhole him as an *outsider music* performer (a categorization that can also reduce people to *freak show curios*) but I say he's a maximum rock 'n' roll modern primitive! John's a one man wrecking crew fusing *psychotronic* culture inspired lyrics with a weird, old Japanese fuzzbox and guitar evoking the history of rock n' roll filtered through early SUICIDE and THROBBING GRISTLE! A veteran of over 20 years of psychic rock warfare, he still delivers his originals and choice covers (including 70s Texas punk) with sincerity, audacity, inventiveness, humor, and RAW power! You should also check out his captivating contributions to *Roctober* fanzine.

THE STRANGE ATTRACTOR (myspace.com/thestrangeattractor): I'm not exaggerating when I say my power trio has no precedent among the Chicago scenes (punk and otherwise). We are the only mutants synthesizing situationist and ultra leftist anti-politics with not only punk (60s garage to 80s hardcore) but also 70s glam, 60s and 70s soul, 60s and 70s bubblegum, reggae, jazz, surf, 50s R&B and rockabilly, metal (late 60s to modern extremes), CAPTAIN BEEFHEART, etc. We want to see people dance, sing, clap, destroy this society, and create something better to our music. We did two CDs and for more information get in touch with me—my e-mail address is at the end of the report.

DISROBE is former RAT BASTARDS. They play fast hardcore with a little grind in it. They have a CD and have played around town a lot including on WLUW and WZRD. They rock the donkey's ass like a hurricane! Rock over London! Rock out Chicago! Al plays furious bass with his fingers like a Jaco



Pastorius (ask your old jazz fusionist relatives about that cat) of hardcore.

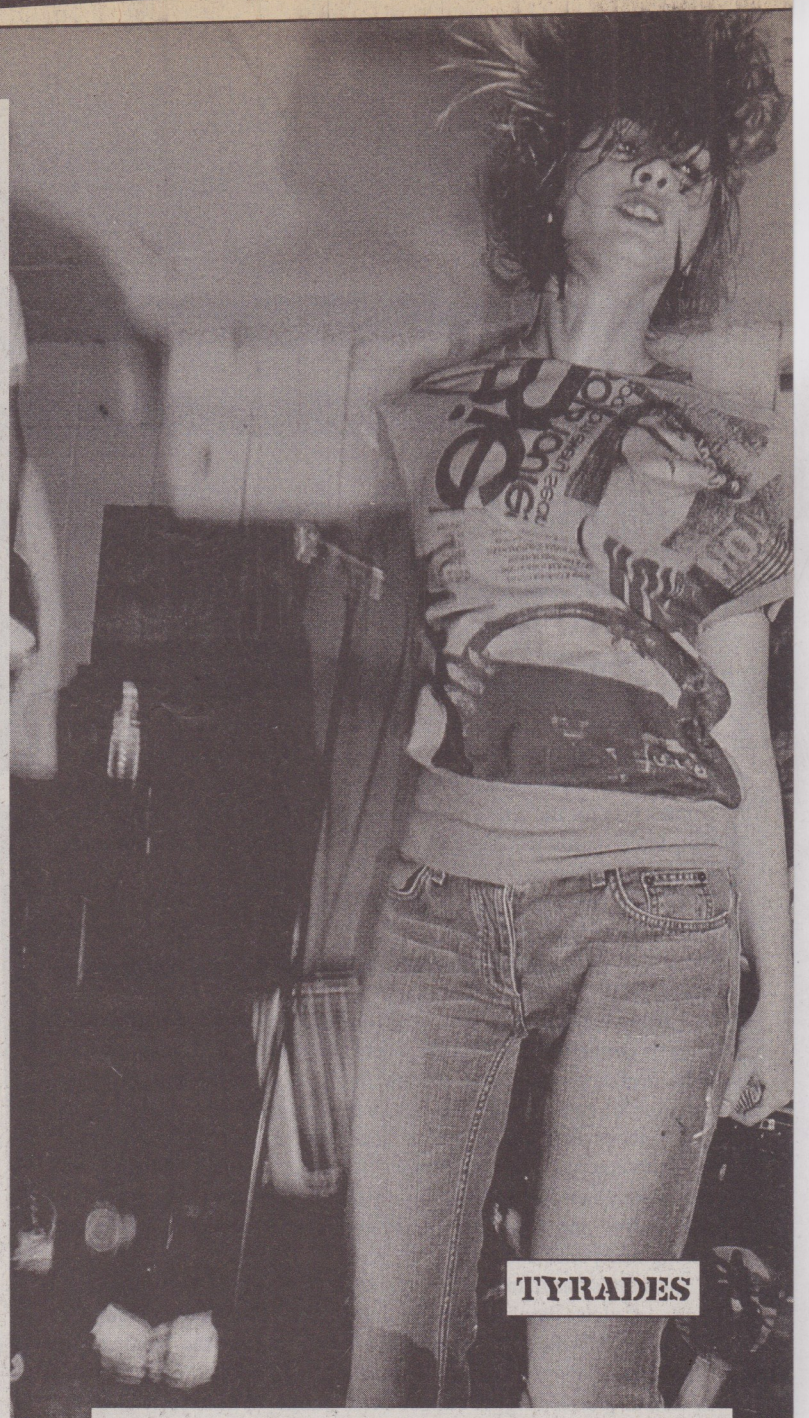
THE WORST: If you dig the Functional Blackouts then you'll dig these cats too; if you hate the former you'll want to bury the latter. A reckless noisy, post punk sounding trio that keeps getting better (they should be called something else like THE SHAG BROTHERS). They share Rob on bass with THE FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS.

Radio

We have four college/community stations that play punk more or less daily that reach hundreds to thousands of listeners: WLUW, WNUR, WZRD, and WHPK HPK. I've been doing pirate radio since 1999 on Free Radio Westtown, Guerrilla Love Radio, and Redline Radio but with the last station we had gear stolen and lack a stable, cheap or free space to start up again anytime soon. Other pirates may be operating but they are probably more *low key* than we were and may not play punk. (For example, a street gang got busted last year for doing an all rap station and warning people about where and when cops were patrolling which was a good community effort.) I don't own a computer so I don't get to scan online stations much but I know they are out there playing varieties of punk.

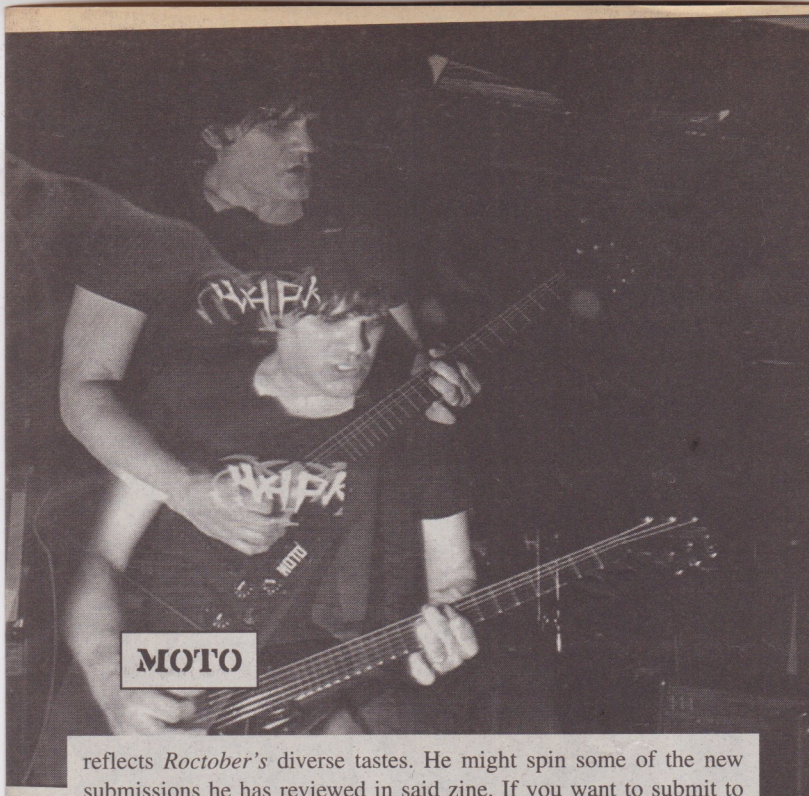
WLUW basically has three specialty shows playing punk: *Reality Radio* on Tuesday nights from 10-12 Central Standard Time, has been playing more international and local hardcore since Mariam from South Kore Records joined Darius from Criminal IQ and became a permanent second DJ—with stuff like THE SPITS, KAJUN SS, THE CATHOLIC BOYS, etc. as well as older punk and post punk like KILLING JOKE and WIRE; Kate and Rachel's *Old Style Show* dusts off amazing 60s and 70s punk, soul, reggae, glam, funk, etc. following Reality Radio from 12-2AM; and *Underground Communiqué* on Friday night from 11-2AM plays melodic hardcore, metalcore, pop punk, emo (don't blame me I'm just the reporter), 80s hardcore, occasional 70s stuff like THE ADVERTS, modern arty metal like ISIS and PELICAN (although they don't see themselves as metal—they crossover to open minded headbangers), etc. Both *Reality Radio* and *Underground Communiqué* have live bands play in the studio. You can listen to WLUW online anywhere at www.wluw.org and Instant Message them. Contact Criminal IQ and Underground Communiqué about submissions to their shows and playing on them. WLUW is supported by listener donations and is no longer funded by Loyola University.

WNUR is Northwestern University's station; they are the strongest college station here with a signal of 1000 watts (!). It has daily rock shows that play punk but are infamous for the *Fast and Loud* program on Saturdays from 11:30PM - 2:00AM. *Fast and Loud* was started in 1983 by then DJ Doug Cohn and played the latest in hardcore, Oi!, speed metal, and some 70s stuff with twisted unique bands like early KILLDOZER and NO TREND mixed in since they appealed to some hardcore fans too. They released a good station compilation of many big names in the local punk scene called *The Middle Of America* (featuring ARTICLES OF FAITH, THE EFFIGIES, NAKED RAYGUN, SAVAGE BELIEFS, OUT OF ORDER, etc.). After the mid 80s, the show's quality has gone through roller coaster like dips and climbs (which is inevitable given that different people have different tastes and experiences with punk). Still, they deserve credit for keeping this show on for 22 years! You can also listen online to them at www.wnur.org. For submissions contact Marta Cuciurean-Zapan, Rock Music Director at 847-491-7102/rockmd@wnur.org and WNUR 89.3 FM/1920 Campus Drive/Evanston, IL 60201



WZRD aka *The Wizard* has been keeping a tradition of free form music programming alive for decades. They don't do specialty music shows (they did air Maximumrocknroll Radio years ago) but they play a huge variety of things all the time. They used to be wilder in the 80s and before when they had DJs that did sound art and tape loops of free jazz. The first college radio punk show in Chicago was done on WZRD with Terry Nelson when I was suffering through elementary school. Check out their zany website at www.wzrd.org. For submissions contact enmarkow@neiu.edu, Evan M./Music Director/773-583-4050 ext. 3819/WZRD/ 5500 N. Saint Louis Ave./Chicago, IL. 60625

WHPK might not have a consistent punk show, I can't pick them up where I live, but they have *Roctober Radio*; my friend Jake and his very young daughter do an eclectic show that also



reflects *Roctober's* diverse tastes. He might spin some of the new submissions he has reviewed in said zine. If you want to submit to him directly (not that way) you should go to www.roctober.com and contact him for the zine and his radio show. Otherwise, University of Chicago's station has Mike O' Flaherty as Rock Music Director and an office number at 773-702-8289 where you can try reaching him. WHPK/ Reynolds Club/ 5706 S. University Ave./ Chicago, IL. 60637/www.whpk.org

Zines

I haven't seen many new punk music zines or smaller ones that publish consistently in a while. Some zines are geared more towards indie rock and may mention some things from other subgenres like hardcore or bands THE TYRADES once in a moon. I'm sure many know about *Horizontal Action* and *Punk Planet* by now; but, I haven't seen any other subgenres like Oi!, crust, straightedge, etc. represented in awhile either. I'll mention a place where you would be able to find new local punk zines and *Roctober* since it stands out among many music zines.

Quimby's has managed to survive since the early 90s bringing all kinds of zines, books, comics, tracts, and other aberrant cultural items into Chicago before others tried to hop on the bandwagon. They have plenty of zines that are still not distributed far and wide, as well as glossier bigger budget ones. Quimby's Bookstore/1854 W. North Ave./Chicago, IL 60622/773-342-0910, FAX 773-528-1979 www.quimby,s.com

Roctober: I'll mention this zine again for some noteworthy punk items. In addition to Mr. Battles, and myself, other veterans of the local 80s hardcore scene contribute articles and artwork such as Joe from LIFE SENTENCE / REGRESS and Anthony from RIGHTS OF THE ACCUSED. Some back issues to check out include one with an article and CD of Steppe brothers bands including NEGATIVE ELEMENT, a popular *kiddie* hardcore band in the early to mid 80s, and a *great* article, *Black Punk Time*, which covers many local, national, and global Black punk and new wave related performers and scenesters from 1976-1984 that you can also see on the *Roctober* website. I contributed to that one and also did an illustrated article on skinhead and punk reggae in the current issue.

Venues And Booking

We have a handful of DIY spaces at the moment that have had some memorable shows: The Ice Factory, Albion House, Command Center, and Texas Ballroom/Diamonds In The Heart Of Texas/First Base. Other spaces have come and gone, including two galleries in Pilsen that have stopped hosting all ages shows since last year, yet there are always dedicated people ready to set up shows despite the odds against them. Perhaps the biggest obstacle we face is the draconian meddling of the Daley administration; they've been making it harder for youth and others in general to organize events in private residences and rented spaces since they tried to squash vernacular culture under *anti-rave* legislation. Still, we continue for many reasons since we are in a battle with current capitalist trends towards making cities more attractive to tourists and higher paid professional demographics at the cost of more dispossession and dislocation among those of us who are working class and poor. Some of these spaces mentioned don't want the world directly contacting them so I'll also mention two other resources that can get you in touch with people who have done booking with them.

Command Center is a living room that surpasses this blasé description by hosting diverse shows with everything from extreme metal to queer rap to THE CLOROX GIRLS to South Kore ruffians and more! The people living there are cool to deal with. For more information contact: Billy (also a zine producer and distributor and in THE FORGOTTEN FOUR) at zinester@fastworks.com

Texas Ballroom/Diamonds/First Base is located in the Southside neighborhood of Bridgeport. This building houses on the third floor an old ballroom space that can fit 400—500 people. The Diamonds and First Base spaces are smaller and on the lower levels. These spaces are collectively run and house collective members. Texas Ballroom tends to do special events and usually

require a written/e-mail proposal. If you're in town they ask you to meet with them. If you are doing multi-media stuff or other projects that are hard to do in bars, clubs, galleries, etc. contact them. Diamonds and especially First Base in the basement handle punk, experimental, and indie type shows more. Go to www.texasballroom.com for more information.

RAISE THE RED LANTERN is a former Southside hardcore band used to put shows on at a place called *The Needlehouse* which had previous tenants that were notorious needle experts/shooting gallery marksmen. They have started to do all ages shows up north. For more information contact: moonsovermyhammy@msn.com

PSC is the South Kore Records collective's gig tentacle. They tend to put on more hardcore, grindcore, and crust shows but they've also had others that don't fit in to those categories now and then. If you're in a D-Beat band you will get limo service, a swimming pool full of champagne at the magnificent Days Inn, a vegan deli tray complete with escargotless escargot, and a special credit card with a $5000 limit forged especially for the drummer.

Rockout Chicago is a local gigs listserv that covers many of the punk and hardcore all-ages shows around town, as well as some stuff outside of these genres. If you want to join contact Megan at: chicapalta@hotmail.com or rockoutchicago@yahoogroups.com

Chicago Hardcore.Net will get you the dirty lowdown on much of what constitutes hardcore these days in Chicago, and the suburbs from gigs to discussions on various hardcore related subjects. (For example, what type of wine goes best with escargotless escargot and caviarless caviar.)

Criminal IQ books a variety of things from M.O.T.O. to hardcore to psychobilly to 70s punk acts, and beyond. As I mentioned they do small and big gigs; they deal fairly with people unlike some promoters and venue owners around town doing both 21 and over and all ages. Contact them at criminaliq@hotmail.com

I do occasional barrier breaking events, usually benefits that involve food and drink as well as live music and other information exchanges. I draw from my eclectic tastes and radical ambitions to put on memorable events. Contact me for information.

The Mutiny takes pride in having a *huge* urinal in the men's room. If you like playing rowdy 21 and over shows, drinking mini pitchers of beer, and general debauchery this is the *dive* to play at! They accept any band (punk, metal, and general rock) and you don't even need a demo to get booked! They've had some touring bands as well as locals. You won't make much money but at least you'll get to tell your grand kids about the urinal! Call Ed or Rhonda at 773-486-7774 (Monday nights are usually the best time to call).

Record Stores

Rock Bottom Records is a new store run by punks; they are the first punk record store to open in the Southside! Rock Bottom/753W. 32nd St.

Laurie's Planet Of Sound Records has Nick from VEE DEE working here. Laurie's Planet Of Sound/4639 N. Lincoln Ave./773-271-3569 or www.lauriesplanetofsound.com

Record Emporium has Paul from M.O.T.O. working here. The owner boasts of having the best selection of BREAD recordings in Chicago – that's more than I can say. Record Emporium/3346 N. Paulina/773-248-1821 or www.recordemporium@prodigy.net

Hi Fi Records has Joe of LIFE SENTENCE and friend of Dom Nation from THE GOBLINS (Chicago,s best masked band) owns this store. 2568 N. Clark or 773-880-1002

Video

You should find video cassettes of *Chic-A-Go-Go*! You can find out more about this nine years old, local cable TV hallmark at the *Roctober* website. Needless to say, they are based on a 60s kiddie dance show, *Kiddie A Go Go*, and have all kinds of young and old people dancing to diverse music (everything from 50s R&B and rockabilly to the latest urban contemporary hits and beyond) while many performers come on and lip sync. Jello Biafra, THE CRAMPS, and Lemmy Kilminster were interviewed by rat skinhead puppet Ratso. The Mentally Ill, Los Crudos, and The Functional Blackouts are among the many that performed for the kids. The Strange Attractor got kids to destroy a Maury Povich effigy. Truly, this show will delight the whole family!

Well, I hope this scene report helps you out. Again, I wasn't able to capture everything going on in Chicago at the moment but as you could tell things are more diverse here than what some might think. All of those mentioned deserve your support. Good music is good music despite how it's labeled which many in the scene now realize. I'm glad people are being more cooperative; may these sparks ignite desires that drive multitudes to collectively transform the world beyond these current miserable conditions we exist under! Burn baby burn! As Marc Bolan sang "*Celebrate Summer.*" For more information on anything including what I do hit me at soulreb@fastmail.fm

The Soul Rebel

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Breathing life into the stagnant and rotting corpse that is the Southern California hardcore scene, the West Coast Power Violence Crews, known as Demon and Chuff, as well as their associates, are on a mission to bring us out of this shithole, downward spiral this community has been caught in the last couple of years. Thrash, power violence, fastcore, hardcore, folk punk, even punk influenced electro clash. Pushing peoples buttons by pushing their boundaries and still having a great punk rock time is what Demon Crew and Chuff Crew are all about. Also included are the bands that we associate with and/or admire. So with no further ado I give you SoCal:

Bands

ACxDC: Satan and *Ninja Turtle* loving power violence band hailing from La Puente. Known to induce *spazz*tic slam sessions and ritualistic slaughters in the middle of circle pits, we have had singing along to most of our songs since our first shows. We've been compared to the likes of SPAZZ and LACK OF INTEREST due to our style of singing (as well as goofy lyrical content) and for having power violence breakdowns in every song! The name stands for *Anti-Christ Demon Core* and we are the originators of the Demon Crew (as well as Demon crew novelties such as *crucifixions* in which we hold people up against ceilings throughout a whole song without letting them move!). We will have a 7" titled *He Had It Coming* out soon! (Contact: myspace.com/antichristdemoncore or ilovepunkrock666@yahoo.com)

AMERICAN LIES: So here is a folk punk band from Glendora including members of MY VOICE, more on them later, and AxAxSx, more on us later. Inspired lyrics with a socio/politcal nature in the vein of AGAINST ME!, GHOST MICE, and others. It's all pretty mid-paced to fast stuff, intense music. It's similar to AGAINST ME!'s *Reinventing Axl Rose* album. Contact them to get one of their 7"s entitled *Animal Liberation* (ska_punk51@hotmail.com).

AxRxMx: APATHETIC RONALD MCDONALD are comin' at ya' from one of the most unlikely of places in So Cal-Fontana. This band is what happens when a bunch of straightedge, thrash kids break edge and become scenester coke addicts. Similar to FUCK ON THE BEACH except there are clap *alongs*, odd timing, and the occasional break to do a line of tweak. Fun kids with a sense of humor so fucked up its hard not to laugh at or with them. They have hundreds of CD-r demo releases and will eventually get a seven-inch done sometime in the near future. Pick it up before it's a collector item as half the members will OD and/or turn Christian (contact tombradycore@yahoo.com).

ASSHOLE ASSASSINATION SQUAD: Possibly the band with the longest name out here that is not emo or mosh-metal. Thrashy, youthcrew-hardcore, with a minute amount of pop punk, played by members of ACxDC, AMERICAN LIES, and CREAM SODA, again, more on them later. Imagine bands like MUKEKA DI RATO, DOWN IN FLAMES, and maybe some YOUTH OF TODAY and you get us. We sing in both Spanish and English. Only two demos out so far but we soon will record a 7" (contact myspace.com/aas or ilovepunkrock666@yahoo.com). BASTARDASS:

The illustrious BASTARDASS...where would LA be without its very own version of UNHOLY GRAVE? LA crusty thrasheads paying tribute to the man-Yanni! These dudes are all about rocking hard and partying even harder. All of there songs have to do with how amazing *they* are and how Henry Rollins is not cool. They have a demo out and are expected to release a split seven-inch soon on the guitarist's label, which is also the home for many of these bands, Militant Records. You can see them playing at a backyard near you and if you're lucky they might even play a noise set, which are known to be terribly violent, similar to a CROM show (contact them at myspace.com/bastardass or narcoterrorismo666@yahoo.com).

BROKEN NEEDLE: We started this disaster back in 2001 with the end of LIFE'S HALT. Charlie had some songs written and presented them to Todd and Ryan. Rehearsing with Eric Butterworth on drums and John Westbrook on 2nd guitar, we put together about six songs. Then, we picked up Gearbox on drums (formerly of TOTAL CHAOS) and it was a sure fit. In late 2002 to early 2003, we played our first couple of shows. During this time, we recorded an eight-song demo for an upcoming seven-inch on Lengua Armada records. Then we lost John, only to pick up Jeff (MANU MIDGET!) and that brings us up to date. We will play anywhere, anytime, with anyone. Thanks for your support, now *get it in the pit* (contact myspace.com/brokenneedle). CREAM SODA: Thrashy, fast hardcore similar to CAPITALIST CASUALTIES except they sing about fun shit like Captain Planet, skating, Ernie killing Bert, etc. They recorded a demo that they never released so unless you know them or have seen them play you're missing out on one of the most fun bands from SoCal. I mean come on, who could wear a gauntlet and expect to be taken seriously. Their best show was when they played at The Orphanage and two of their members ran through a glass window cutting them and smearing the blood on the ceiling and their faces. These dudes also hail from the beautiful city of La Puente (note: La Puente is a ghetto; that last part was sarcasm) (contact crudo187@yahoo.com).

CRANIAL CONSTIPATION: Playing a style known to them as *grindie* (grindcore mixed with a little bit of indie rock) these Covina

BROKEN NEEDLE

kids are definitely stirring the pot up a bit. They dress up in weird costumes at shows, do RADIOHEAD covers, and look like they belong in the MOVING UNITS, yet sound like PHOBIA on crack. Low crust, high crust, blast beats, grind...what more could you ask for? A demo has been out for a while and they are supposed to be releasing their seven-inch soon (Contact myspace.com/cranialconstipation or fallenarmyblows@hotmail.com).

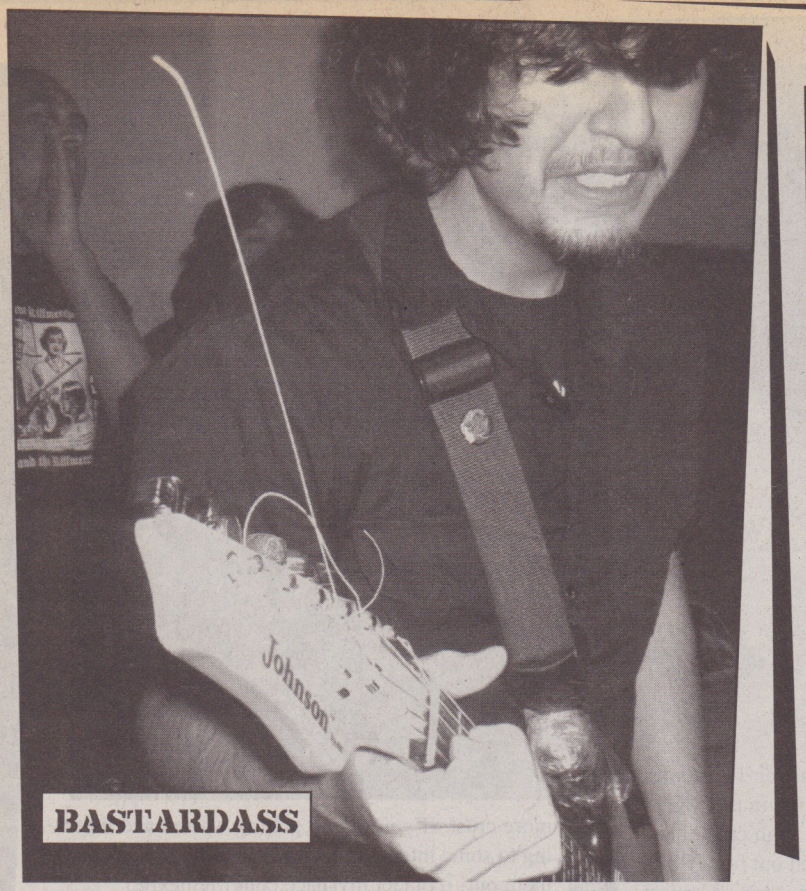
GLUTTONOUS SLOTH: plays an amalgam of metal, grind, power violence, experimental noise, doom and thrash. Kind of like LE SCRAWL without the wierd instruments or even YACOPSAE with a dash of DYSTOPIA. Intensely personal lyrics about the loss of a child coupled with dumbass lyrics about spider man. Includes Andres of BASTARDASS. The bass player thinks that anyone that plays fast on bass with a pick is a sellout so he only uses his fingers. They have a ten-song demo out so get it soon! (contact narcoterrorismo666@yahoo.com) GREEN GUMMI BEARS: These folks are a dance machine! Punk and garage influenced dance rock similar to DANCE DISASTER MOVEMENT or YEAH YEAH YEAHS, though not as much on the latter. A steady diet of Saturday morning cartoons, overly sugared cereal, and too many late nights playing videogames turns a band into this. You'd think Jakey (singer) is on tweak when he gets a mic in hand but he's so hyper that he'll dance for a full 20 minutes crooning over dinosaurs, robots and Teen Titans. La Puente has a pretty strong dance scene that's mixing with the punk scene fairly well (contact myspace.com/greengummibears or ihateu_187@yahoo.com).

LOCKDOWN: Plays old school, youthcrew hardcore like YOUTH OF TODAY and MINOR THREAT, along with more mainstream new school hardcore bands such as HATEBREED and EARTH CRISIS and come from the West Covina area-heavy songs with an emphasis on family, friends, a clean lifestyle, considering vegetarianism and fucking up haters. They never come off as preachy and that's what I like most about them. Here's a band with punk rock morals and don't throw them in your face or tell you how to live, yet their very existence suggests a wholesome way of life. LOCKDOWN Crew is an honorary part of the Demon Crew family and I love these guys (contact myspace.com/lockdown or xatxwarx@cs.com).

LIFE IN EXILE: Fuck man, did HIS HERO IS GONE come back!? I wouldn't count on that happening but LIFE IN EXILE has taken up where HHIG left off. Distortion drenched yet melodic, heavy as a fat guy, bong influenced riffs, and a drum that sounds like a cross between a shotgun and a machine gun. This band also used to be known as DECONTROL back in the day but changed their name along with their style which used to be a bit more crust. If you're into getting wasted and listening to some intense crust for half an hour than check them out! (contact myspace.com/lifeinexile)

LECHUZA: More folk punk, but this time from Long Beach. David is a one-man band with an acoustic guitar and harmonica playing songs about losing love, hating work, being a bike punk, wanting to die, edge and non-edge kids uniting, and more. Most of his songs would translate well as death metal songs because they are so brutal. He has a voice like an angel and it takes serious balls for one guy to go up in front of people and play. Think along the lines of DEFIANCE: OHIO. He's also really involved with the main chapter of the Alternative Gatherings Collective that is helping to build an infrastructure for all of our scenes so we can finally get a sense of unity in such a splintered subculture (contact lechuza@gmail.com).

MOBILE TERROR UNIT: Thrash unit from East LA featuring the second guitarist and singer of BASTARDASS. This is the band with the second longest name in our scene and they took it from a 9 SHOCKS TERROR title. They have a demo that they recorded using a shitty boom box and then transferred to their computers, so basically they have a raw as fuck, *live* CD-r up for grabs. They mainly play around the LA area at backyard gigs but they deserve more than being seen by a bunch of apathetic, drunk crusties. Give them a show, send them a naked picture, and check them out (contact myspace.com/mobileterrorunit moses_cuellar@sbcglobal.net). M MOTION SICKNESS: Used to be three guys with two keyboards and mics but now they added a drummer since their rhythm synthesizer broke. They now have a more structured sound and play something comparable to THE RAPTURE meets LE TIGRE



meets EDIE SEGWICK in a more raw form. Electro clash with a strong influence from the dance and punk scenes. They are known to tear up the dance floor with their catchy tunes and when they break into their theme song screaming "*We are! Motion! Sickness! Fuck you!*" the crowd goes wild. (contact myspace.com/motionsickness).

MY VOICE IS STRONGER THAN YOUR EMPIRE: A two-piece folk punk band with Casey and Mike from AMERICAN LIES. Sometimes they play an electric guitar with no distortion and a snare drum or sometimes they play with a full drum set and distorted guitar. Great stuff and different enough from AMERICAN LIES where its actually justified to have another name (contact ska_punk51@hotmail.com). NO NOISE: These sweet looking satanic grinders come from the horrible city that is Chino and sound like the raw grind ala the 90s era, *Cry Now Cry Later* bands (UNRUH, ENEMY SOIL, and CROM). Mid-paced, metal-laced grind with a dirty bass sound and scratchy raspy vocals recorded by Craigums of WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? fame. Awesome energetic shows with tons of two stepping parts and blast beats. Many demos out, soon there will be a record as well (contact myspace.com/nonoise nonoise666@yahoo.com).

SHE'S DEAD: A very long time ago these guys used to be known as AMERICAN DISEASE. But after a year of starting the band, almost as a sick sad joke, their loves, whom they found solace, were taken away from them, by a greater force. A force they never met before. Helpless in their infinite sadness, all they could hear in their heads was, "She's dead! She's dead!!!" and renamed the band in honor of their angelic muses with the only thing they will hear in their heads for the rest of their lives. So, if you ever come across these poor, romantic brutes in a forest, mountain, desert, or in El Monte, make way...for their story is a sad one. And, they are very, very sensitive! Quick bursts of *blastcore* executed with an intensity that leaves your ears bleeding at the end of their set, as well as an occasional burnt out amp spewing smoke. Usually at this point in the set the finale reaches a climactic point resulting in bleeding, self flagellation or fucking up their already fucked up equipment. Songs screamed in both Spanish and English. Amazingly furious and brutal like being caught in a whirlwind at a razor-blade factory (contact myspace.com/shesdead).

XFMD: Electro thrash? Circus Grind filtered through a computer? FETUS EATERS meets...something techno? Hell, I don't know what the hell this is but it's rad. Andres, mastermind of Militant records, and guitarist for GLUTTONOUS SLOTH and BASTARDASS, creates, distorts and warps all of the music, lyrics and samples using a computer. When playing shows he's either been in a Panda Express outfit, a *Lucha Libre* mask or as himself, using only an mp3 player and a microphone. He's yet to have released his demo but its near completion (contact narcoterrorismo666@yahoo.com).

ZIP GUNS: Garage thrash band THE ZIP GUNS, named for a firearm one can make at home using household items in preparation for an upcoming revolution, is one of the catchiest bands around. With BEATLES covers, songs about the dangers of escalators (consumerism), a theological stance (atheism), and other gems in their repertoire, they have earned comparisons to THE HIVES and even VITAMIN X. It's always fun to see a bunch of kids screaming into the microphone "*I dont! I dont! I dont believe in God!*" (contact ska_punk51@hotmail.com).

Venues:

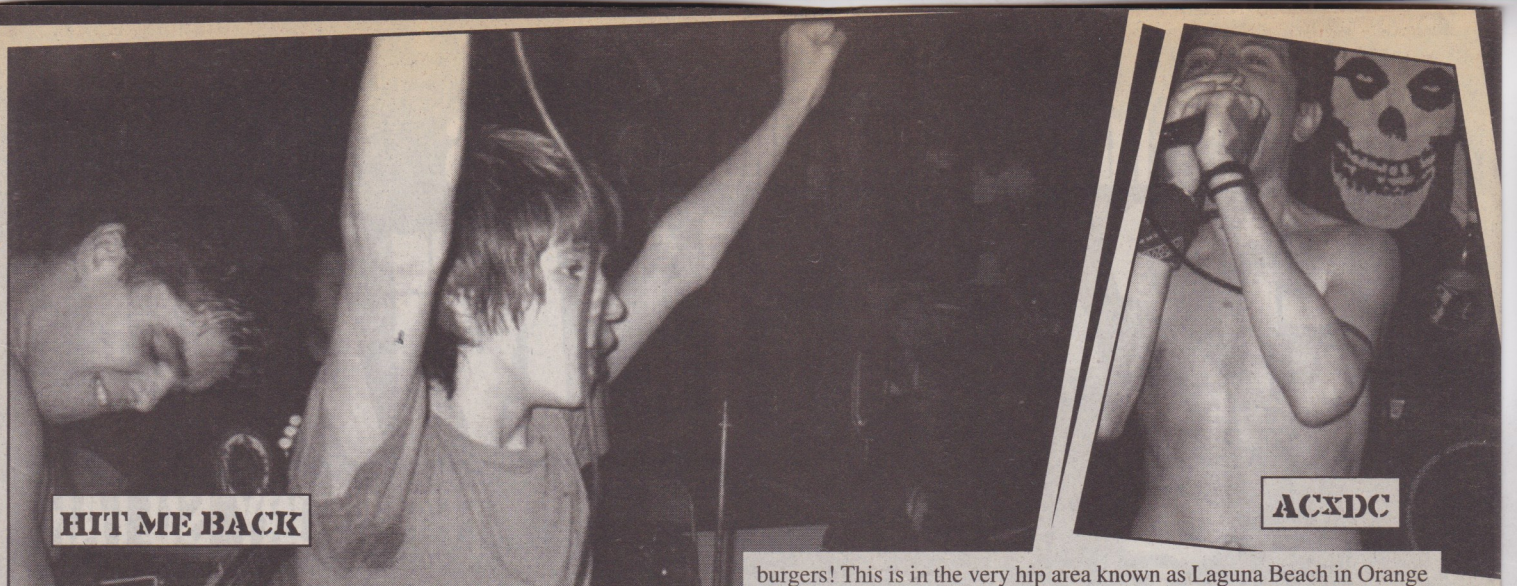
The Smell: Used to be LA's premier punk venue but unfortunately a wave of no wave, indie, art rock and noise bands took over our scene as the punks had all but destroyed it. Yet, every once in a while you can relive a better time past and experience a great punk show again in the middle of LA's notorious skid row. This place has housed the best shows ever including LIFES HALT, LIMPWRIST, DYSTOPIA, and VITAMIN X (www.thesmell.org).

Workman's Circle: This is a progressive Jewish community center in LA run by old Jewish activist-anarchists that allows myself and a few other LA punk kids to have shows twice to three times a month on weekends. We usually do shows that gain exposure for local bands and are interested in all styles of underground related music. Recently, we have done shows for LIMPWRIST, EDIE SEGWICK, MOONLIGHT JUNKIES, BURNING BRIDES, WIVES, and many of the bands mentioned above (contact ilovepunkrock666@yahoo.com).

Cobalt Cafe: This place is in Canoga Park. It has housed an amazing amount of shows but I'm not too sure on how cool the folks that run it are. I've heard rumors that they're a bit shady so if you do try and get a show here be wary. But then again I haven't heard any complaints from bands like BAD ACID TRIP, CAUSTIC CHRIST, or MUNICIPAL WASTE, who have played there in the past (contact www.cobaltcafe.com).

The Wherehouse: Literally a warehouse in Long Beach turned into a venue very recently. Its run by a bunch of crusties I unfortunately don't know but is an awesome place that has also recently done a LIMPWRIST show. They have also housed a few of the AGC resurgence benefits and the TRAGEDY show as well.

Backyards: This is pretty much the only way we



exist out here. The backyard scene is pretty massive. Garage shows, backyards, parking lots, empty pools and living rooms seem to be the norm so try your luck with any of our contacts and well see what we can setup.

Food and Record Stores:

Headline Records: On Melrose strip. One of the most well known punk record stores around. They have an incredible selection and its run by two of the most knowledgeable punks around. Great selection of rare stuff and all varieties of punk including: garage, psychobilly, thrash, grind, power violence, old school, new school, etc. They sell videos, CDs, vinyl, shirts, patches...*everything*! (www.headlinerecords.com)

Dr Strange: Cool punk shop over in Rancho Cucamonga with an awesome selection of punk, street punk, Oi, and more. Also, a fairly nice collection of thrash, grind and all the harder sounding stuff. They have a huge selection of rare stuff but they keep it in the back so you will have to ask to see a list (contact www.drstrange.com).

Amoeba Records: This place is huge and if you're like me, a person that enjoys *all types of music*, don't go here because you will end up broke. It's the size of a warehouse filled with new, used, rare, and easily available titles of all genres of music. They're located off sunset in Hollywood (contact www.amoebamusic.com).

Happy Family: Best fucking vegan food place around, hands fucking down. At lunch from 12-2:45 they serve a plate of food (always heaping), a bowl of soup and rice or deep-fried bread for only $4.50! Or, at any time of the day you can get a big plate of food for seven to nine dollars that will leave you with leftovers. It's all Asian and extremely delicious! (www.happyfamilyveg.com/)

Covina Tasty: Cool little vegetarian fast food on Citrus and Covina in the city of Covina. All of his stuff is veggie and the steak burger, chicken burger, vegan burger, and chicken nuggets are vegan! Somewhat expensive but great for the tummy.

Del Taco: This is a judgment call on whether or not you want to support fast food chains. This is a fast food Mexican/American joint that is actually pretty veggie friendly. Cheese quesadillas, bean and cheese burritos (you can ask them to include rice and guacamole), french fries, shakes, etc. Not the most vegan-friendly but the food is not cooked in lard so if you need something quick this chain is ten states wide (www.deltaco.com). Taco Loco: Another rad, little, beach hippie-stand that offers hemp food, blackened tofu and mushroom burgers, vegan cookies and other awesome little tidbits. I enjoy the black bean soup and tofu burgers! This is in the very hip area known as Laguna Beach in Orange County (contact Taco Loco. 640 S Coast Hwy, Laguna Beach 92651).

The Stand: Tiny little vegetarian place in the Laguna Beach (Orange County) area that offers a ton of food that is preservative, additive, and other bad stuff free. Tastes homemade and is located near the beach! The half soup-half sandwich deal is always awesome! Only a block away from Taco Loco on S Coast Hwy! One World Vegeterian Cuisine: Relatively new place to open up in my area. Awesome vegetarian and vegan Vietnamese/American/Mexican food! This is a sort of sit down restaurant that's really cute and romantic. The food is all veggie and there are also notations on the menu that let you know if something is vegan or can be made vegan. I recommend the pork fried rice or the philly cheesesteak, both vegan style! (http://www.oneworldveggie.com/)

Orean: In Pasadena, they offer a lot of awesome vegan goodies including chili dogs, chili burgers, shakes, fries, burritos, pancakes, etc. (www.oreanshealthexpress.com). Veggie Bistro: This spot is located in uptown Whittier near a cool little old-town area with thrift stores, restaurants and the like. Really good, Asian, vegetarian food. Beef and broccoli is the best! Its moderately priced and a very quaint environment (contact 6557 Comstock Avenue, Whittier, CA 90601).

Honorable Mention:

So in case you didn't know, because you know...you live under a rock, the following bands have been huge in the LA scene and also across the US. Although I won't spend a large amount of time discussing them they should be mentioned and you should check them out if you have not already: HIT ME BACK (thrashy hardcore by some South Central kids), RESIST AND EXIST (crusty peace punks), STREET TRASH (Long Beach thrash monsters), and REAGAN SS (LA's finest fastcore). Some bands that should be checked out even though they have been defunct for a while include: GRUNION IQ (sloppy thrash pop punk), DEADSET (post hardcore), OUT OF VOGUE (thrash/youthcrew), FIELDS OF FIRE (posi-core), YOUTH RIOT (youthcrew), SUBSISTENCIA (Spanish speaking, femme fronted hardcore), TRAGATELO (LA supergroup), and JESUS CHRIST AND THE PIRATE FUCKERS (noise/ shit).

Final Goodbyes:

So as to not have an even bigger scene report to take up the wonderful pages of this fine magazine I will be sending a second installment in a month or two of updates on the bands in this one, more places to eat, more places to spend your money on records, bands that have broken up but you should still check out, and even more bands of the various but current So Cal scenes. So until then, I hope you take the time and contact some of these bands, go to some of their shows, and become their friends. Sergio (Emo Wuss) (contact ilovepunkrock666@yahoo.com or www.myspace.com/emowuss).

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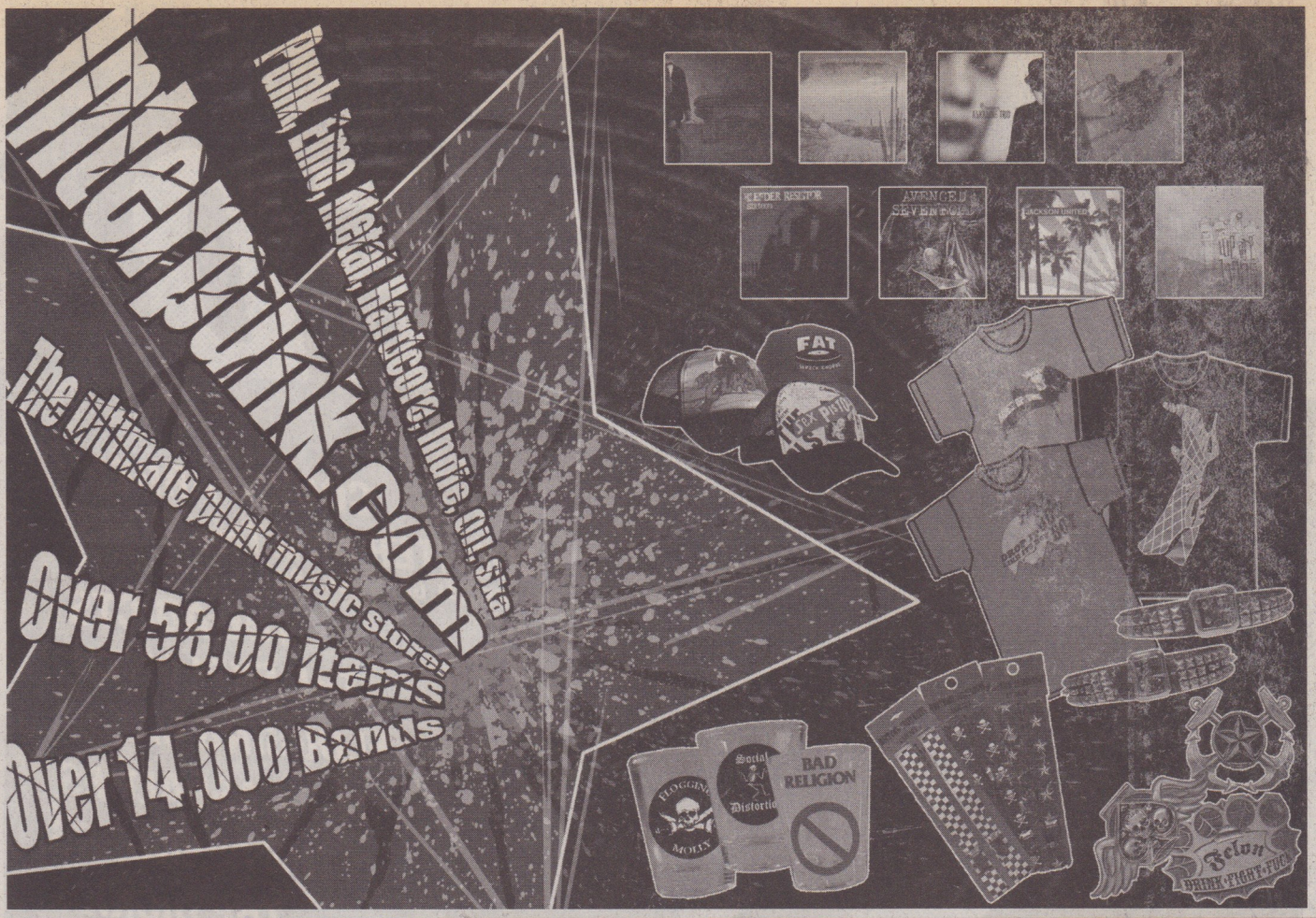

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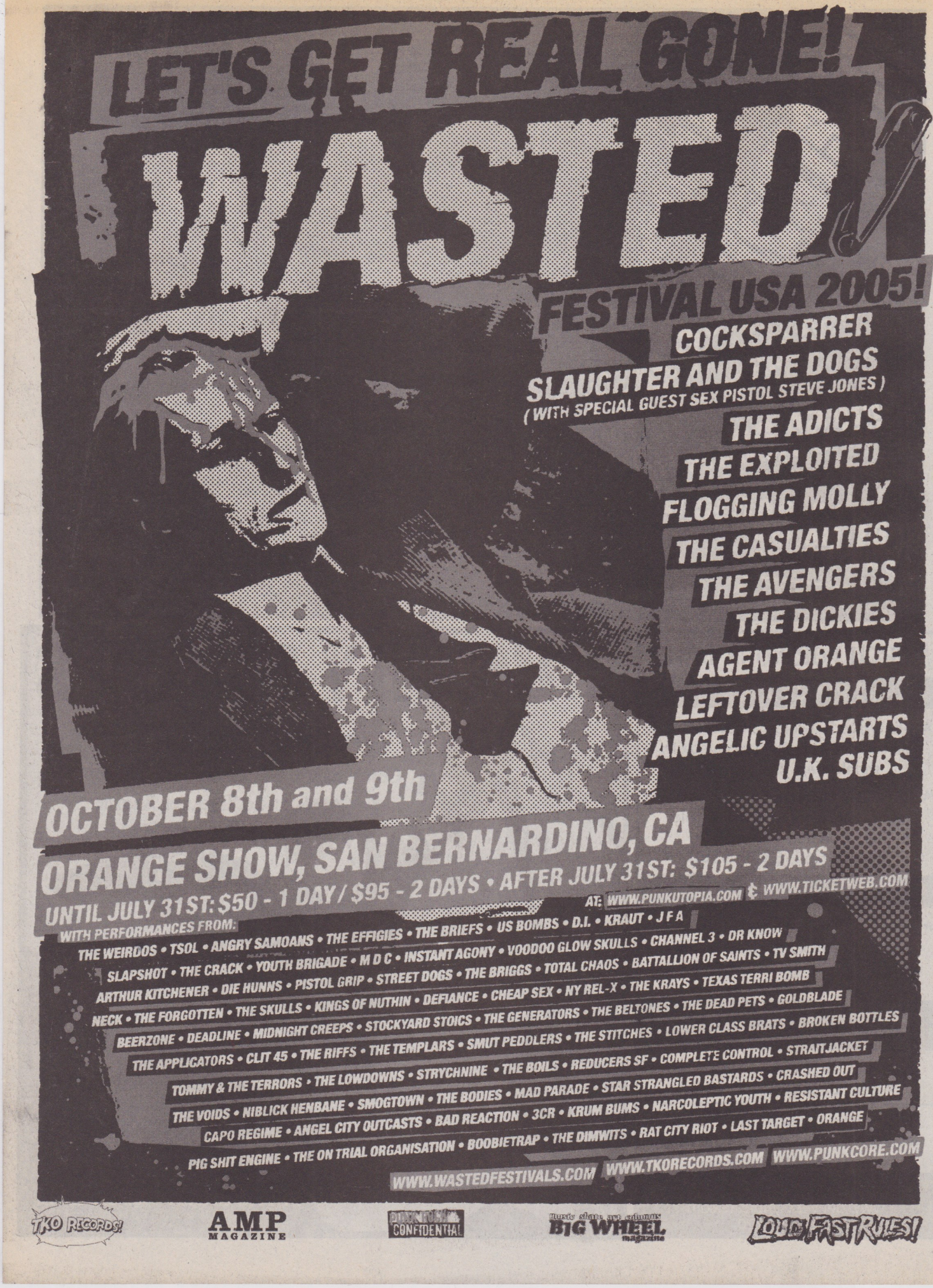
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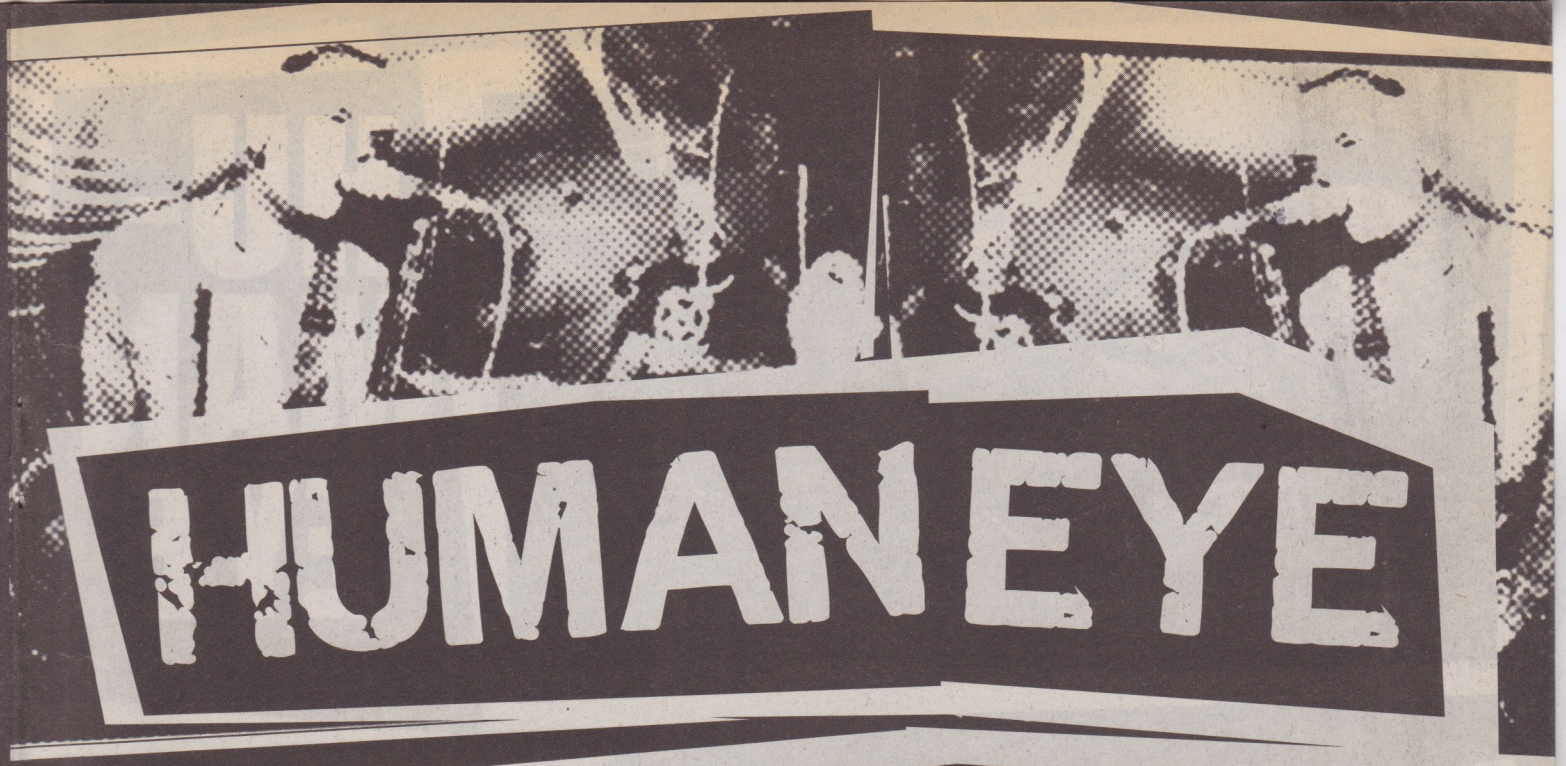


HUMAN EYE

BEGIN TRANSMISSION

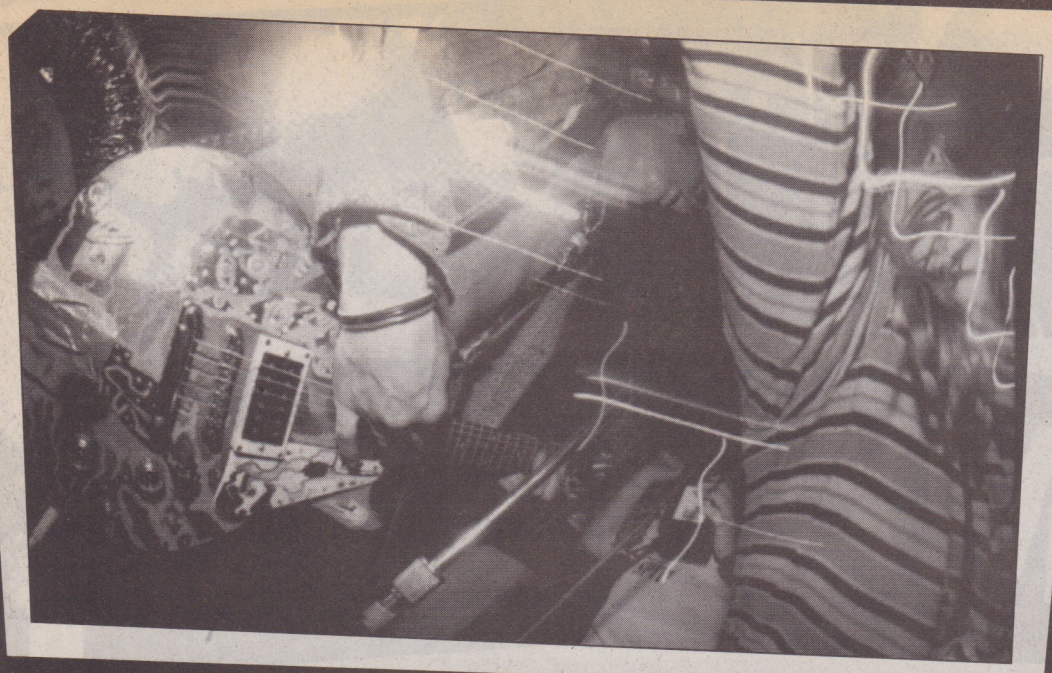
Detroit is a fucked up town full of fucked up people. I think we're all fucked up from the smoke outta the big incinerator. Maybe we're all brain damaged from the rust and shitty water? Who knows. Regardless, some mutants fair better than others. Human Eye is a better breed o' mutant. Efficient yet destructive, minimalist but overindulgent, chaotic yet organized, artistic yet ugly, and so on... And if you compare them to Chrome one more time you're dead, fucker! Hype often bloats dog turds to mythic proportions. For once this is not the case. Love 'em or hate 'em, they don't give a fuck...

MRR: First things worst... Who are you and what do you do?
Tommy Hawk: I play bass and I work at a kidney transplant center.
Johnny LZR: I play noise pianos. I also do solo stuff. *Fundamental Fragments* was the last CD title. For employment I'm an artist's assistant. I'm also going to school for astrophysics.
Billy: I play drums and other instruments needed—sax, xylophone, congos. Right now I'm doing construction and playing in other bands. I'm in an African beat band, I play congos. I also do paintings 8 to 10 feet tall and I'm an out-of-work teacher.
Timmy Lampinen: I sing and play guitar. I work freelance wherever. My last job was for an auction company cleaning up factories and moving heavy machinery with a Hilo. Jamie Easter from the Piranhas' dad was my boss. I also make posters and flyers for Human Eye and the bands I book at the Painted Lady Lounge. I write music, drink, DJ, cuddle with kittens, puppies, ladies, etc.

MRR: Human Eye is one of the best band names I can recall in years. Who thought it up and why do you feel it's fitting?
Timmy: Well, when I walked in the door at Johnny's house to practice for the first time, Tommy was building one of those anatomy models of the human eye. I've always had an interest in eyeballs when it came to doing art so I said, "Aw! That'd be a great name for a band."

MRR: Now, when did you guys get started? Tim, you obviously made a pretty quick transition from Clone Defects to Human Eye. Were you doing both at some point?
Johnny: No, Tim called me up to skate and found out I was playing music. So we started playing together, grabbed Thom from upstairs, and got a drummer.
Timmy: No, Clone Defects broke up about three months prior. I needed a fix of noisy rock 'n' roll. Somethin' weird and new! Mars was sending an electrical impulse in my brain... "Call Johnny LZR! He builds pedals and plays noise pianos! Call Johnny! Call Johnny!" So I picked up the phone and I dialed and the operator said, "You can't make this call because you ain't got no long distance!!!" So I said, "Fuck!" I scrambled in desperation to my skateboard and rode up to the payphone and put in the change and it was the operator again!!! "You bitch!!" I yelled. She said in her nasally way, "You need fifty cents." Eventually I got a hold of him and we started writing and Tommy joined, and Jimmy too. Then, Jimmy went to prison for stealing sound and visual equipment from a high school, but that's another story so we got Billy.

MRR: So "the underground" has been abuzz with more chatter than the Department of Homeland Security has ever seen about you guys. How fucked up is that? Do you feel it's justified or just another case of people casting their hopes in a member of a favorite band?
Johnny: Maybe because there haven't been too many new projects out there recently and seeing as how Clone Defects were liked by many and Tim's creative musical talent... people wonder.
Timmy: Well the old underground is dead, the Gold Dollar days with all the old garage and punk bands that would play there. Those bands have either broken up or are making lots o' money. So I think people are looking for some-



HU-MAN EYE

thing else. And there's a whole new group of young kids comin' around that dig us. And we've all been hangin' around town for a while. I think the Clone Defects help too.

MRR: Do you think if there was no Clone Defects prior to Human Eye that there would be such build up and such a crazy range of opinion on your shit?
Johnny: Obviously not, people were really into Clone Defects (myself included), so when someone starts something new from a band they like, people get curious about it and what it sounds like and whether it's similar or different.
Timmy: I think somewhat it has to do with the Clone Defects. Most of the time we were just a straight up punk/rock 'n' roll band, and Human Eye is more wide open to experimenting. Hopefully it throws Clone Defects fans off in a way. But, I'd rather people dig on it like it's a new band that has just been born to planet Earth. Clone Defects did some experimenting from time to time too.

MRR: Speaking of which... Tim, I feel pretty strongly that this is the full extension of everything you've been trying to grasp at for years. Obviously, everyone contributes to it but do you feel satisfied with it?
Johnny: Yes, he does (just kidding).
Timmy: Well, when the Clone Defects started I was way into the old Cleveland bands, still am. Electric Eels, Peter Laughner, Mirrors, Pagans, some aspects of Pere Ubu. Also a lot of Damned and *Killed By Death*. So Clone Defects would do a lot of weird shit here and there. But that's what rock 'n' roll is, right? Rebellious, untraditional, and out of wack. Human Eye is a lot of what Clone Defects were and vice versa. It all has to do with living and breathing animals. Yea, I'm satisfied. Music is how we stay sane in this insane and evil world.

MRR: A lot of people have made accusations that you're kind of an image band. How do you address that? I don't see it but since we reside in the same town but tell the children how you feel.
Johnny: Image? How?
Timmy: Image is important to us. I don't wanna be some boring live band with flannels, t-shirts, and shorts. The way we dress on stage is pretty much how we look every day, minus a couple of things like octopus, paint on the face, and other props. I guess we should walk around the grocery store with that stuff and scare old ladies.

MRR: Let's talk about the Chrome comparisons. I think everyone is so at a loss for how to explain you that they result to the "lazy record reviewer" mode of just saying stuff that's kinda close. How do you feel about it?
Timmy: There's no way around being compared to somethin' unless yer the Piranhas. The Chrome comparison is the greatest compliment ever, and great promotion. But I don't think we sound like Chrome…maybe 20%. So, I guess the record reviewers only listened to 20% of the album. If I heard a review of a band sounding like Chrome, I'd go out and buy the record in a second. Chrome is one of my all time faves!
Johnny: I don't see it. We are kinda raw like Chrome but that's where the comparison stops I think. It's hard to describe us. I always have trouble when people ask.

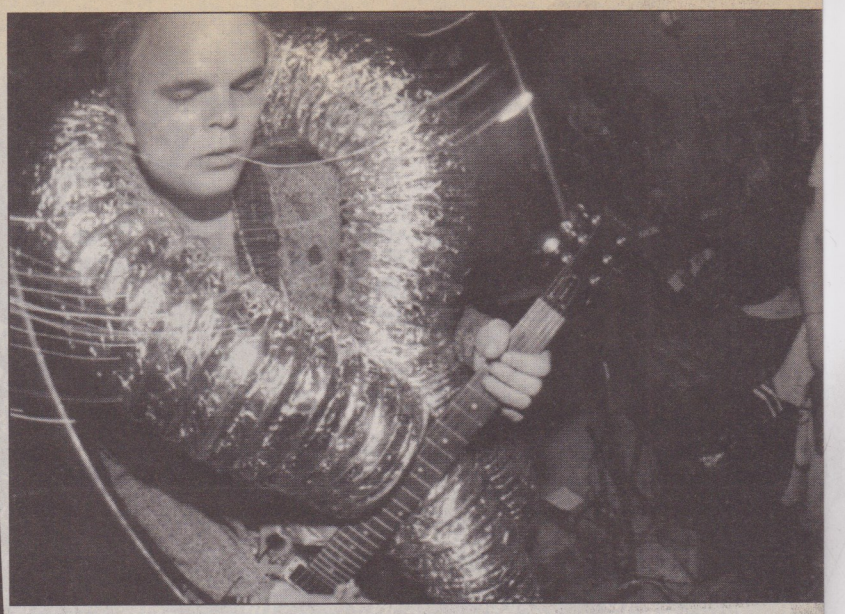
MRR: You did some out-of-state gigs recently. How was the reaction? I read about your trip to NY…not to be boring and redundant but what happened?
Johnny: I met a chick and drove thru a blizzard. You guys got kicked out of the Motor City Bar. Haha!
Timmy: The shows went great, about 100 at the first night in Brooklyn and about 60 or so the next. Pretty good for a first time. Tom Hyland with DotDash.com booked everything and Tentacle Lizardo came with us. People dug them a lot and Slovenly Records want

to put out a record for them now. But transportation-wise, it was hell...ask Shana! "Hey dude, where's my car?! Lets drink some more. Lets stay another night." We had no money and the mini-van wasn't going to make it back to Detroit according to a couple of mechanics. Oh yeah, the transmission was ready to go at any minute. Everybody either took a bus home or stayed behind with van because it still had our props and some equipment in it. We had to figure out what to do with the props and the van within a day before our bus ride. We left props and what-not in Queens at a friend's house. We drove the van to the bus station in Times Square, put the hazards on, and ditched it in front of the bus station...terrorist style!!

MRR: Switching gears, we just recently talked about the dreaded M word recently. Let's talk about Punk Rock economics. People seem to think bands can fill their gas tanks with rainbows and good intentions. Whadda you think of it all? Where do you draw the line on it?
Johnny: "I'm thinkin' bout good vibrations!" No, but even though we love and need to make music, it is always nice to have some money to break even and have enough gas to get home.
Timmy: Well it's hard to make money playing underground music if yer not very well known, of course. I guess you just gotta work hard at promoting yourself if you wanna make any sort of a living. But, if you travel a far to play a gig for 20 or 30 people you should get enough for gas and food, and hopefully they'll put you up. You know, enough to make it to the next town.

MRR: Speaking of delusions, versions of your album were available online at rates that made Metallica look like whiners. For once, here's a band where the whole package is important. How did you feel finding out that your art was being traded around like a 40 over a trash fire? And why was the release so delayed?
Johnny: Kinda shocked actually. First that it got out there when only a few people had it and second because so many people were interested in it.
Timmy: Don't be throwing those 40-ouncers around! That shit is like gold!! And my liver is almost gold plated, ha! I was pissed...fuck computers, fuck technology, fuck the Internet. I feel it is important to have the whole package for any band I dig. Hell, a burnt frickin' CD with a plain paper cover and super ruff mixes that bleed out some how will do. It's nice that people want to hear the shit, but why spoil the anticipation? Luckily, those were demo versions recorded from across the street in the woods.

MRR: Is there a place for downloaded music on the Internet? What's your final analysis good doctors?
Johnny: No idea. There are some OK bands on epitonic.com but the bands put up the music for you on their own on that site.
Timmy: It's for modern cyber youth, cyber child molesters, shopping addicts, geezers, and boring old farts... basically, people that don't really love music that much. On the other hand, it's kind of killing the music industry... it's really bad for the famous, such as, Emenem, 50 Cent and all those morons. That's the good part of it, because that shit isn't even worth taping.



MRR: So Detroit has a bunch of lousy sports teams and, people seem to think, a lame music scene. What's your opinion as active participants?
Johnny: Detroit has great music. People here sometimes aren't that motivated to look or risk going to a show of some band they have never heard of but there's a ton of great music here.
Timmy: Well I had to quit playing for the Pistons to go on tour and on that tour I got my first Red Wings...ewwwwwooooooo. As far as a scene, I think it's growing now that bars like the Painted Lady Lounge are open, and also the 2500 Club somewhat. There's a lot of great new bands such as, Terrible Twos, Heroes & Villains, Frustrations, Odd Clouds, Tentacle Lizardo, Bill Bondsmen, Whores of Babylon, Genders, Red Red Red, Valentinos, Tyvek, etc.

MRR: A zillion words or less: Out of the mountains of music out there why should anyone give a shit about you guys? What separates you from the drivel?
Johnny: Who knows? Maybe because we aren't trying to fool anyone or do the same old thing. We're not here to get rich. We are here to warn the humans of the dangers coming to them in the next century!

MRR: Now that we have that out of the way and the album is out... What's next yo?
Johnny: 1) West coast tour. 2) Recording second album. 3) Getting my amp fixed. 4) Rock Opera. 5) We, as a band, are gonna climb Mount Everest. 6) Two words: "Bowling League." 7) Human Eye ray guns. 8) Thommy Hawk professional line of bass picks. 9) Trying to get Billy to slow down.

MRR: Final words?
Johnny: Final words like on my death bed? Or just for now? *Buy our records!*
Human Eye, 2930 Jacob, Hamtramck, MI 48212
The Painted Lady Lounge: 313 874 2991 (for booking or just to chat)
Johnny LZR: nrthrnsol@aol.com

END TRANSMISSION

LES BELLAS

LES BELLAS IS A FRENCH BAND FROM THE SOUTH OF THE COUNTRY, IN THE TOWN OF PERPIGNAN, A SPECIAL LITTLE TOWN WHERE THERE IS NOTHING TO DO. BUT IT IS FULL OF COOL PUNK AND GARAGE BANDS, INCLUDING THE SONIC CHICKEN 4, THE MIGHTY GOGO PLAYERS, THE FATALS (FROM NEARBY TOULOUSE), SWEETIES AND THE BANANAS, PSYCHOS IN LOVE, AND LES TUE L'ARME. WE HAVE BEEN ORGANIZING TONS OF SHOWS HERE FOR THE OBLIVIANS, REVELATORS, DM BOB AND THE DEFICITS, NEW BOMB TURKS, THE DRAGS, FLESHTONES, REGISTRATORS, TV KILLERS, BANTAM ROOSTERS, THE SEEDS, ET CETERA, AND EVERYBODY SAID THAT THE HERE CREW IS GREAT. IT IS ALWAYS A BIG FIESTA AND WE HAVE GREAT RESPECT FOR THE PEOPLE ON TOUR. WE DIDN'T WAIT FOR THE FRENCH MEDIA WANKER GARAGE INTEREST TO HELP THE SCENE. HERE IN FRANCE ALL THE MAJOR COMPANY BASTARDS ARE LOOKING FOR A FRENCH WHITE STRIPES TO SIGN. INSTEAD, WE HAVE BEEN BUILDING A REHEARSAL STUDIO, WE PRODUCE AND MASTER OUR OWN RECORDINGS, MAKE OUR OWN RECORDS AND COVERS, AND WE NEVER LET ANYBODY TELL US WHAT TO DO.

INTERVIEW BY GILDAS COSPEREC

MRR: WHEN DID YOU START PLAYING TOGETHER?

LAS BELLAS: The band was formed in summer 2003, in Perpignan, south of France, next to the Spanish border, by two couples: Marie (drums) and Lionel (guitar) and Nadège (trumpet/vocals) and Guillaume (guitar, vocals). We rehearse in Marie & Lionel's garage.

MRR: BELLAS' PREVIOUS BANDS?

LAS BELLAS: Lionel and Guillaume played in The Beach Bitches, a band that several members Fatals and Sonic Chicken 4 were in. The Beach Bitches made a few albums on various French labels during the second half of the 90s. We were known to do wild gigs, with a sound ranking from The Stooges to garage punk. Lionel also played in The Voxmen, which was in more of a psychedelic/noisy vein. Guillaume played in the Toxic Farmers, a punk 'n' roll band that released two EPs, one on LGDC and the other on Nasty Products. Nadège played in Morpion's Circus (a Specials/Gong mixture) that did one split demo CD and an album. This is the first serious band for Marie; she played for a while in The Chipolatas.

MRR: WHAT ARE YOU LISTENING TO NOWADAYS?

LIONEL: Back From the Grave, Nuggets box set, Captain Beefheart, Dirbombs, and The Detroit Cobras.

MARIE: The Seeds LPs, and, in my car, The New Bomb Turks.

NUDGE: The Rocky Horror Picture Show soundtrack; Didier Super, a French satirical singer; and The Libertines.

GUILLAUME: The Beatles, The Jam, The Kinks, The Who, Buzzcocks, and 60s garage rock.

MRR: DO YOU WORK HARD?

LAS BELLAS: At first, the band was just a way to be together, to play for pleasure and write songs. When we had the opportunity to open for The Seeds—our first gig — it was a kick in the ass; we had to work very hard not to be completely ridiculous facing the whole crowd that attended the show. By that time, Guillaume and Nadège lived in Spain, they used to come for weekends which we spent playing music and eating big lunches.

MRR: HOW DO YOU RECORD?

LAS BELLAS: In a little studio with two eight-track recorders that a local anarchist association lets us use for very cheap. They are old friends; half of the local rock scene exists just because they carry on. Guillaume does the recording for everything we do; we do a live track, than we do the overdubs. We also do demo recording in our rehearsal studio, all the time, we have tons of demo recordings.

MRR: THE BELLA'S SINGLE WAS RELEASED ON PROFET RECORDS. WHAT'S THAT?

LAS BELLAS: That single was released in early

December 2004. Profet is Piero's label, Piero from the Go Go Players who is also The Fatal's recording producer. He plays with Kerry in Les Deux Larmes too. Piero had listened to one of our recordings and he insisted on releasing it as a single; that's now sold out. So we decided to release a second one by late April. Profet also released singles by the Go Go Players, and Les Deux Larmes.

MRR: ANY NEW PROJECTS OR DREAM PROJECTS? RECORDS, GIGS, TOURS, TRIPLE DVDS?

LAS BELLAS: We're going to release a second single in late April and carry on recording, that's the thing we really dig. We don't do so many shows because we have jobs and we can't handle it properly right now. Nevertheless, we'd sure enjoy playing in San Francisco, or doing a record for Sympathy!

MRR: INFLUENCES?

LAS BELLAS: The whole band would say the Jam, rockabilly, and The Gories.

LIONEL: The B-52's, The Fleshtones, The Cramps, Stax.

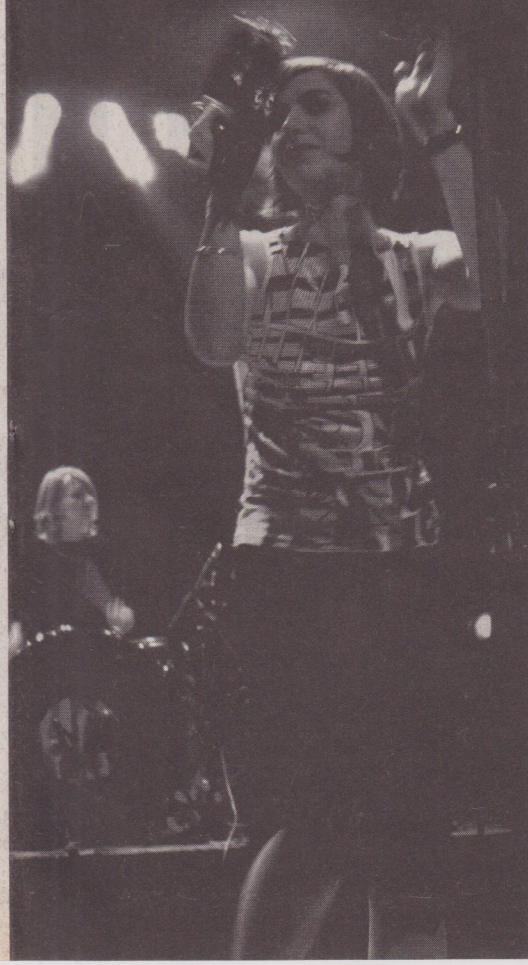
MARIE: The Cramps, Detroit Cobras, Indian music, and The New Bomb Turks,

NADÈGE: The Saints, for my trumpet playing.

GUILLAUME: Garage and garage folk.

MRR: THERE'S NO BASS PLAYER IN YOUR BAND.

LIONEL: That was just to stay together; we never were against having a bass player, but that's one person more to call, bear, and feed! We use our guitars to do the bass, like early Cramps or Gories, and we really like that.



MRR: HOW DO YOU SEE YOUR BEACH BITCHES PERIOD, LOOKING BACK AT IT? WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER BEST?

NADÈGE: Sometimes I felt like spending my time picking Guillaume's clocks, who used to finish the show almost naked.

MARIE: I wasn't in the band, but I was not very far from it. It's fifteen years since I've been bearing you! Gardien du Canigou, Beach Bitches and Bellas. We had good laughs, and lots of good things to remember.

LIONEL: It didn't work bad, actually, we did records, toured, and played in each and every place in France. We enjoy remembering ourselves playing with the Space Beatniks, opening for Teengenerate, touring for the French label Banana Juice with Dare Dare Devil and The Atomic Spuds. It never went farther, which is not such a bad thing.

MRR: YOU ALSO ORGANIZED A FEW SHOWS? DO YOU CARRY ON?

LIONEL: We actually organized lot of concerts with Marie for a long while, we don't do it that much nowadays, but we still book touring bands at home.

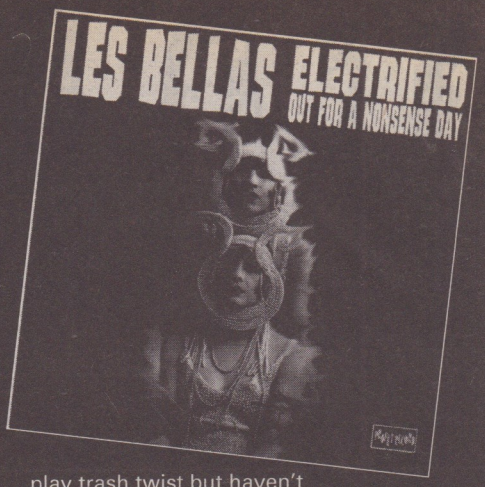
When I owned my record store, Vinyl Maniac, we used to organize two concerts per month. We did almost every Crypt band of that time: Country Teasers, Oblivians, DM Bob, Revelators, Bantam Bosster, Ass Draggers, and lots of garage bands like the Satelliters, Registrators, The (Fabulous) Drags, New Bomb Turks, Woggles, and more.

When I stopped owning that record store, the bands' tour managers used to propose bands to me that I didn't enjoy that much. That was the Swedish heavy scene time, I don't like that kind of sound, and good bands were becoming expensive. We then started linking between rooms and tour managers, more than direct concert organization. We've now become a hostel specialist for beat rockers! We often have groups at our home: The Bassholes and Jeffrey Evans, Demolition Doll Rods, The Bellrays. Maybe that's what I actually like best; it's the only way of really meeting people: listening to records, drinking aperitifs, et cetera.

All those people are cool; they often sacrifice a lot of what they have to carry on touring, which is a thing we never had the courage to do. My coolest record with that was to fit all of The Country Teasers in our flat, wearing stripped pajamas.

MRR: PERPIGNAN SEEMS TO BE NOISY AGAIN NOWADAYS? IS IT AGAIN LIKE IN '94?

LAS BELLAS: Nowadays, there is like a garage revival in Perpignan, with The Go Go Players and The Sonic Chicken 4. We really dig Sweeties and the Bananas who play trash twist but haven't released a record yet.



There're a lot bands in town, but we lack unity. I think that when we have managed to organize ourselves a little, it will be kinda terrific!

There are also labels awakening: Nico, The Sonic Chicken 4's occasional xylophone player, released a single by Edison Rocket Train on Sentenza Records, there is of course Profet, and others that may emerge.

Few people organize concerts. There's a cool radio program animated by two Sonic Chicken 4 members. What's still stunning is the quality and quantity of bands with the town's small size.

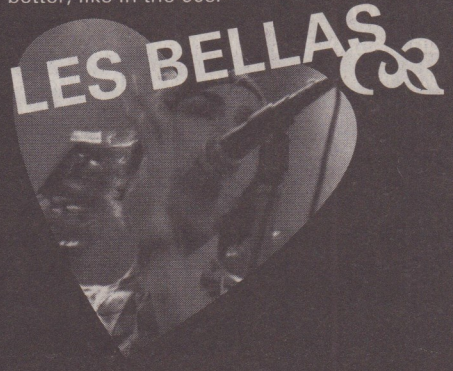
MRR: YOU HAVE LISTENED TO ALL THREE FATALS' SINGLES, I GUESS?

LIONEL: Piero gave them to me, they're super trashy and that's exactly what they wanted. The Fatals are really impressive on stage. They're the best French band of that kind I've ever seen, along with The Magnetix and a band that used to play several years ago called the Kabuki Men. That's not was we're really used to listening to, but we're happy with what's happening with them.

MRR: WHAT'S YOUR OPINION OF TODAY'S GARAGE SCENE? WHO ARE YOUR FAVORITES? THINGS YOU ALL HATE? WHAT ABOUT LO-FI GARAGE?

GUILLAUME: We don't listen to lots of today's lo-fi stuff; we like the early things better. Today's stuff sounds less exciting.

I don't dig the more and more rotten sounding thing, it's just a scenester thing; I like the bands that didn't do it willingly better, like in the 60s.



HAMMER

Hammer is an amazing hardcore punk band from Tokyo, Japan. Taking cues from the classics like Gauze, Lip Cream, and SOB, they have created their own relentless style over the past seven years as a band. I was lucky enough to go on the road with these guys for a week on the East Coast last fall and watch them destroy everyone night after night. Their live show is an exercise in intensity! Their songs build and crash like powerful waves, disregarding anything in their path. The thing that impresses me most about Hammer, however, is that they are some of the most down-to-earth people I've ever met. No pretense, no gimmicks, just good guys who play great hardcore. Catch them in the Midwest this September with Signal Lost. *Interview and photos by Chris Pfeffer*

MRR: How long has Hammer been playing together? How did the band get together?
Yusuke: Hammer was originally formed by Tomo and Shino in the spring of 1997. I joined in 1998 after I had found their "bass-wanted" ads in *DOLL* magazine. Jun joined two years ago. He's the best drummer ever.

MRR: How old are you guys? Did you all grow up in Tokyo?
Yusuke: We're all over thirty! Shino and I grew up in Tokyo. Tomo is from Fukuoka, and Jun is from Sendai. Now we all live in Tokyo.

MRR: How did you guy get involved in punk/hardcore music?
Yusuke: In the mid-1980s, when we were all in our teens, there were a lot of great underground bands. So it is natural for us to have gotten involved in punk music. I had friends in high school who listened to metal and hardcore records I had never heard before. They gave me a lot of records—I went crazy for heavy and fast underground music.

Shino: When I was a teenager, I heard The Blue Hearts. Then I began going to punk rock gigs. At that time, I liked '77 punk—and I still like it—but I wanted to listen to much harder music, so I started listening to hardcore punk. When I look back at those days now, I realize that I wanted to be shocked—and I still am shocked by punk.

MRR: What is the scene like in Tokyo? What kind of places does Hammer play there? What are some of your favorite local bands, past or present?
Yusuke: We have so many hardcore bands in Tokyo, so you can go to hardcore shows every weekend. Some bands have started to organize shows not in venues but in small studios. We have enough places to play in Tokyo. Hammer usually plays in venues but sometimes in studios. We have shows once or twice a month. My favorites from the Tokyo scene are: early Rose Rose, Slight Slappers, Mind of Asian, and Dudman!
Shino: It's stimulating to have so many great bands in Tokyo. I like Gauze from the Tokyo scene.
Tomo: Gauze and The Blue Hearts.
Jun: Gauze, Lip Cream, and Nukey Pikes.

MRR: Japanese bands have a reputation for being powerful and tight. Hammer is no exception! Did any of you study music formally before playing punk rock?
Yusuke: Thanks, Chris! We try to be powerful and tight at every show. None of us study music formally, we just have rehearsals every week and have played many shows during these seven years.
Shino:I think the most important thing in playing punk rock is ideas. So studying music is needless.

MRR: Does it require a lot of dedication to keep a punk band going in Japan? I hear that rehearsal space can be very expensive and that sometimes bands have to pay to play shows. How do you guys deal with these situations?
Yusuke: Doing a band in Tokyo costs a lot for sure. Since we don't have any basements or free spaces to play, we have to use rehearsal studios. It costs about 40 USD for just two hours. And yes, in cases when we can't get enough people, we have to pay some money to the venues. In Japan, venues and studios have all their own equipment, so bands do not need to buy their own equipment and vans. All we have to do is to bring our instruments. But we have to pay money for it [to play or record]. Of course, some bands have their own equipment. All we can do is work hard and try to do our best at every show and release good records to make more people come to see us.

MRR: How did you guys get involved with Deranged records? Was it his idea for you guys to tour the U.S. last year?
Yusuke: Yes, Gord of Deranged Records proposed doing a US tour to us. I don't remember exactly when, but maybe three or four years ago when we were looking for some foreign labels. At that time, we just wanted to tour overseas and we thought we should release our stuff on foreign labels first to spread our name and music. Then I sent our two-song cassette to a number of foreign labels. I got Deranged's address from the NK6 LP. Gord showed interest in us and released a 7". Thanks, Gord!

MRR: What are your thoughts about the tour? Had any of you been to the States previously?
Yusuke: That tour was our first "real" tour. Even in Japan, we only have one or two shows when we play outside of Tokyo. So everything was fresh for us. We experienced many things that we never experienced before in Japan. Anyway, your country is so huge. Thanks for your long drives, Chris. Before that, we all have been to the US privately. I went to Los Angeles and San Francisco for sightseeing more than ten years ago.
Shino: Many punks helped us in every town. I felt a bond of punks beyond the border. Thanks.
Tomo: I stayed with a family in Boston about twelve years ago.

MRR: What was your favorite show or city?
Yusuke: First, we'd like to say thanks to everyone who helped us and gave us an opportunity to play in your town during the tour. We enjoyed every show, especially the show at the record shop called Green Eggs and Jam in Asheville. We've never had any shows at record shops before, so that show was really exciting!!! Awesome show.

MRR: I agree! I also think the show at Tight Pockets in Athens, Georgia was amazing! So, what happened to you guys at customs?
Yusuke: Let me tell you what happened at customs! I thought that the officers at customs suspected us of being a band and of getting paid by playing. They took us to another small room with many cameras and asked me many, many questions. They also checked all our bags and wallets. Then they made many phone calls to the tour organizer Timmy to make sure why this Japanese band was coming to USA. We were caught at customs for about two hours and we missed our connecting flight. We really hope to have no troubles at customs next time.

MRR: I hope not! We were pretty scared last time. The customs guy even wanted to call Timmy's boss! How did your shows in the States compare to your shows in Japan?
Yusuke: In Japan, there are usually more bands at one show and the show starts at 6 pm or so. Most bands do sound checks before the show in Japan. In the US, there are no sound checks and only two to four bands play. That's the difference. Also, we sometimes feel that there is a border between us and the crowd when we play shows in Tokyo. But in your country, there are no borders and people seem to know how to enjoy the show, I think.

MRR: You guys seemed to enjoy American food more than some other Japanese bands. What was your favorite thing to eat over here?
Yusuke: I enjoyed American food very much. I like pizza and spaghetti. At a supermarket, I bought a pack of donuts because it was so cheap, but I could not eat them all because they were so sweet!!! *HAHA*.
Shino: American beer was nice. Cheap.
Tomo: I like all foods except hot foods.

MRR: What do you guys do for a living outside of Hammer?
Yusuke: Shino is working for a printing company and Tomo works as a care worker for handicapped children. Jun is a carpenter. I was an office worker but I had to quit my job before the US tour last fall. Now I work for a moving company.

MRR: Shino told me that he works in graphic design. This made me wonder, why do all of your records have the same artwork? Did you just want to have a simple image that people will recognize?
Shino: Strictly, I'm not doing graphic design, though I use computers in

my job. I just want to make our image as simple as possible. It seems that there's no other bands using the same artwork on every releases. I think it's really interesting.

MRR: You guys have a new 12" coming out, right?
Yusuke: Yes, we'll release our new 12" on Deranged in the fall. Hopefully, it will be out before our second US tour. The CD will be also out on Discrete Records at the same time. We just finished the recording for it!

MRR: How are the new songs? Can we expect some exciting new cover art?
Yusuke: Sorry, Chris. Do not expect exciting artwork! Maybe the same as usual. *Haha.*
Shino: Most of our new songs are not so fast, but they have more of a sense of speed than our previous songs.

MRR: Yusuke, you also play in World Downfall. Does anyone else in Hammer have any other bands or musical projects?
Yusuke: Yes, I'm the vocalist of World Downfall. I love to play grindcore! Also I want to release more records. Jun is playing two more bands called Machine Animal and Mad Maniax. He's played many shows with these bands but not released any records yet.

MRR: How was the World Downfall tour you just did on the East Coast?
Yusuke: Our first US tour was amazing!!! Magrudergrind organized the whole tour and they really took good care of us. They rule! Unfortunately, our permanent guitarist could not come with us, so I had to play guitars during the tour. We had six shows in a week so it was a bit hard but we had a really great time there. Extremely fun!

MRR: All of your lyrics are written and sung in Japanese. Does Shino write them? Can you tell us what some of your songs are about?
Shino: The lyrics are written not only by me, but also Tomo. We sing about what we feel in our daily life. Universal themes. And we always try to use easy words. We have not sung about politics yet. I'm not so interested in a thing like changing the world by music. I think it's important to change myself and the people around me first. Then there comes a possibility of changing the politics in the future.
Tomo: Shino and I write our lyrics, and when we write them, we debate about them. We express them by the simplest possible words.

MRR: Do you consider Hammer to be a political band?
Yusuke: Absolutely *no*!
Shino: If someone asks me, "Is Hammer a political band?" I answer "No!" But in the future, I would sing a political song if I thought I could be responsible for what I sang about.

MRR: Most people in the American punk scene are against the war in Iraq and war in general. How do Japanese punks feel about the war? What about other Japanese people outside of the punk scene?
Yusuke: Of course we are all against war. I think punks have a much stronger consciousness of war than ordinary people in Japan.
Tomo: I'm against it. I wrote simple lyrics about the war for the next 12". We shouldn't hurt each other as part of someone else's strategy.
Shino: Of course, I'm against this war. War is not realistic for me now. It's not good even if there's any kind of reason. I think we need to stop wars, and to get rid of small violence and discrimination around us first.

MRR: Yusuke, you speak English very well. Did you study English outside of basic school? What about Shino? Is it required to study English in Japanese schools?
Yusuke: I don't think my English is very good, but thanks for your kind words, Chris. When I was in junior high school, I wanted to be a translator of motion pictures. So I have tried to watch foreign movie videos without Japanese subtitles. I want to be able to speak English more fluently, so I still study hard. In Japan, we generally start to study English in junior high school but only writing and reading. It is said that Japanese people are not good at speaking English, and I think it's true; we seldom have the opportunity to speak English in our daily life.

MRR: Have any of you guys studied any other languages?
Yusuke: No. We should be able to speak English first.
Shino: I only studied English in my school days, and I look up foreign punk bands' words in a dictionary.

MRR: So, you guys have a new record on the way and another US tour booked this fall. Are there any other big plans for Hammer in the near future?
Yusuke: First, we want to do our second US tour without any incident. We're really looking forward to it! After the US tour, we want to have some short tour in Japan. We still have many places where we've never played before.

MRR: I can't wait to see you guys over here again! Is there anything that you want to see or do that you weren't able to on the last tour?
Yusuke: We also can't wait to see you guys again!!! This time we want to have basement shows or house shows if possible, because such things never happen in Japan.

MRR: It will be fun taking you guys to eat Mexican food and go swimming in Austin!!
Yusuke: I seldom have Mexican food in Japan, so it will be a lot of fun to try it! Let's swim together in Austin; I've heard that it is so hot in Texas. Thanks for the interview, Chris!

Hammer US Tour Dates
Fall 2005 with Signal Lost

9/23 CHICAGO, IL @ The Ice Factory

9/24 MILWAUKEE, WI

9/25 MINNEAPOLIS, MN @ Triple Rock

9/26 LAWRENCE, KS @ The Haunted Kitchen

9/27 OKLAHOMA CITY, OK @ The Conservatory

9/28 HOUSTON, TX

9/29 AUSTIN, TX @ Emo's

9/30 DENTON, TX @ J&J's Pizza

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STALAG·17

Society's Fairytale: The Story of Stalag 17

By Lance Hahn

Ideological movements like anarchism and nonviolence are largely just that, ideological, especially in times of peace, when less blatant forms of state violence are visible. So in the case of anarcho punks like Stalag 17 and Toxic Waste from Belfast, the words put into practice are all the more poignant. But anarcho punk was not just one way to analyze the day-to-day reality of life during the troubles. It was also a way to keep looking beyond the violence to the outside world and better tomorrows.

Petesy: " I look back on the anarcho days with mixed feelings. In one sense, they were my first experience of politics outside of the Northern Ireland confines and as such they were refreshing and exciting. The way I think about and react to the world today is totally influenced by the anarcho-punk movement of the 80s. In another sense, there was a huge element of falsity to the whole thing. From one year, being parochial punks who knew very little about anything outside of our tight-knit little community and the tight-knit little communities we came from, we developed the next into experts in world and local politics and looked down on those who didn't share our newfound insights. There was a huge element of bandwagon-jumping that we were all happy to indulge in, but it was still the same old scene of bands slagging off bands, etc. It did progress beyond this and some great things came out of it, though. In terms of how effective it was, where do you think the DIY ethos and a lot of the direct action tactics of the anti-globalization protests came from?"

Despite the geography, Petesy got interested in punk rock and playing in a band the same way kids everywhere in the UK did.

Petesy: "Status Quo were starting to lose their appeal and there was a certain vibrancy about punk that the press hated... So there must have been something to it.

"... Punk was my first experience of live music and at the time it seemed like the easiest thing in the world to get together with a few mates and make a lot of noise. So we did."

As we all learned from *Silence of the Lambs,* we first covet what is in our immediate surroundings.

Petesy: "We were all living in Belfast and three of us worked at a government training centre (sounds sinister, I know, but it was just a boring job!). We'd known each other through the Harp Bar and knocking about the city centre scaring shoppers. I had played (but not gigged) with a band called the Stillborns, TC and Tul had played with Maimed, and Mickey with Paranoid. TC and Tul were trying to form a band and asked me. Mickey, who was training to be a plumber, made us a few mic stands and through this process we learned he was an aspiring drummer. The line-up was complete!"

But at this point, the initial wave of punk rock in Belfast had come and gone.

Petesy: "The heady days of the Harp Bar were over, the Pound was still putting on few and far-between gigs, and there were a fuckload of people who were in bands or who wanted to see bands. So it was healthy in terms of numbers, but not so much so in terms of opportunities."

One last change to complete the band: the name was slightly altered.

Petesy: "I can't remember who chose the name, but originally it was going to be Stalag 13. Someone was too superstitious for this, so the name Stalag 17 was suggested. I can't remember if the Billy Wilder film was mentioned, but there was definitely something more familiar about Stalag 17."

Even with their anarcho leanings, the band played with many classic Belfast punk bands like the Defects and the Outcast who were becoming fairly well known internationally via the *Punk and Disorderly* compilation.

Petesy: "Our first gig was before Mickey had even joined the band. We played support to the Defects in the Pound with Kinky, the Defects' drummer, filling in. The gigs in the pound were always great. It was a total dive and you had to dance to keep warm, but that only added to the enjoyment. The Belfast punk scene was a fairly tight-knit community, so gigs were generally great social events. The majority of the gigs in the early eighties took place wherever would have us (youth clubs, schools, and wherever) and playing support to the likes of the Outcasts and the Defects."

What info they did have about growing anarcho scene in England was made more real by a one-off gig with Crass on their trip to Belfast.

Petesy: "I'd heard about Crass through the hassle they got in the music press about being cast-offs from the hippie era. Like many, I took this at face value and didn't pay too much attention to the band. It wasn't until they came to Belfast and Stalag played with them and we got to meet them that I

realized what committed and genuine people they actually were. From there it was a sort of passion of mine to catch up with the politics the music press had been trying to prevent the punk scene from veering towards for years."

At the time, the only anarchist activity in Belfast was that leftover from the days of the hippies. Years before the founding of the world-famous Warzone Collective, groups like Stalag 17 felt as if they were starting from scratch.

Petesy: "The anarcho scene at the time, as far as I was concerned, was a bunch of guys with beards and women (wimmin) who dressed in black, so no, I didn't feel too much a part of that scene, as I liked bright colors, no beard, and

spiky hair. Little did I know that in a few years I'd adopt the regulation black army trousers and t-shirts!"

Despite the aesthetic differences, there were political realities that made anarchist analysis profound to the punks in Belfast. This was not only a new tactic, but also a fresh way of dealing with the poverty of daily life.

Petesy: "If punk was a social alternative to sectarianism then anarcho-punk was a political alternative to sectarian politics. The rhetoric of anarcho-punk was a bit oversimplistic but it was a breath of fresh air compared to the stale rhetoric of local politics. As far as we were concerned, politics didn't belong to the politicians, and we couldn't have given a flying fuck if people thought we were simplifying the situation. Being in the anarcho scene during the troubles was the same as being in any scene, i.e., you got on with your life and tried not to let the shit seep into what you were trying to create. It would be folly to say that events like the '81 hunger strike and the rise of the National Front in Belfast didn't draw people towards sectarian politics, but we weathered stuff as best as we could and kept our focus on the fact that we were all mates."

Of course, Stalag 17 was also a garage band. Like every other band, they were rewarded with a first demo recording to be reviled and dismissed by band members to this day.

Petesy: "It was actually a four-track two-song demo that we never released at the time. We recorded it at Greg's (Outcasts) house one sunny afternoon and thought afterwards, 'Is that what we sound like?' then never did anything with it. Our first release was on the *We Don't Want Your Fucking War* comp. Next question please!"

A great turning point happened with underground music in Belfast with the opening of the Warzone Collective in the mid eighties. Eventually opening the Warzone Centre on Donegall Lane, this became one of the most respected punk venues, in league with places like Wapping, Centre Iberico, and later groups like Kronstadt Club and the 1 in 12.

Petesy: "My involvement began with the Anarchy Centre, a venue that was run by the gay community and borrowed on a weekly basis by the Belfast Anarchist Collective. I wasn't too involved in the Centre itself, apart from playing there a few times and going every week, but through the centre a few of us got involved with running the veggie cafe above the Just Books shop (and below the Print Workshop). From here we organized gigs and various actions relating to protest campaigns of the time. It was a great focal point for a lot of people and served as the first contact address for the Warzone Collective, which is what we eventually called ourselves. OK so it was a bit of a sensationalist 'we're from war-torn Northern Ireland' name, but hey, we were young and impressionable!"

During these busy days, Stalag 17 became fast friends with the likeminded punks in Toxic Waste.

Petesy: "Some of Toxic Waste were involved in running the Just Books cafe and we also played together quite a bit. The Belfast punk scene was very close-knit at the time so everyone knew everyone else."

That friendship would actually carry through to vinyl with the two bands participating on several different projects together. The first was the result of a Conflict gig set up by Warzone.

Petesy: "The Warzone Collective had helped the Newtownabbey Musicians Collective out by organizing a gig for Conflict who they'd brought across to play at a community festival. It was through this contact that Stalag and Toxic Waste were offered tracks on the compilation."

That record was 1983's *We Don't Want Your Fucking War*. Technically released on Fight Back (a subsidiary of Mortarhate), Stalag 17 recorded "Society's Fairytale" as their representation. Alongside bigger acts like Broken Bones, Anthrax, and the Subhumans, the Stalag 17 track is especially melodic sounding, even with a caustic chorus like "Society fucks. Society kills. Society tells you you better keep still."

With the success of that record and Mortarhate's growing catalog, it was eventually decided that Stalag 17 and Toxic Waste do a split 12" for the label.

Petesy: "That came later. I think the split 12" was actually Colin's (Conflict) idea, as he thought it would be nice for Mortarhate to have an Irish act (or two) on the label!"

The Truth Will Be Heard featured the songs "Party Talk" and "Forgotten Victims" on the Stalag 17 side. Starting with a suitably infuriating sample of Margaret Thatcher, the band rip through a their tunes with a melodic element that blends classic punk machine gun lyrics with some similarities to a faster version of Conflict's "The Serenade Is Dead".

Petesy: "Basically we booked the studio for two hours in which time we recorded and mixed both of the tracks. I think we actually may have run over the time and clocked up two and a half hours. Mickey, our drummer, was making his own way there and got lost so I was just getting behind the kit to bluff my way through the songs when he walked in with a bewildered look on his face. When we got the recording home there was a bridge section on 'Forgotten Victims' that we realized needed another guitar track, but Gaskey couldn't get time

off work to do it, so I went back and did the overdub and remixed the track. I think studio time might have run to a whole hour on that occasion!"

Released in 1984, it would be the last recording the group would make for Mortarhate.

Petesy: "Mmmm... Well it was more a case of Mortarhate deciding what was easy for them and us getting increasingly pissed off. The *Truth Will be Heard* 12' was supposed to come with a poster/booklet, the original of which mysteriously appeared back with us after the release with Dr. Marten's prints all over it. The dirty work of the printers, Colin told us. The dirty work of Mortarhate, we assumed. The most annoying thing, though, was that the record was catalogued as 'From Belfast With Blood.' This was a title Colin had suggested for the 12" and which we had vehemently opposed, as we found it both patronizing and sensationalist (even more so than the name Warzone!). Surprise, surprise, the finished product came back with 'From Belfast With Blood - The Truth Will Be Heard' on the spine. The truth definitely wasn't being heard.

Aside from the Conflict single *The Battle Continues,* which was announced as a benefit for Warzone and from which we received nothing (not even an explanation why we received nothing), we did receive payment in kind from them, so we can't really complain about that end of things. But as far as truth was concerned, it was in short supply."

Despite all this, the band was now becoming related to Conflict and their stable of bands. With the possibility of some commercial success floating on the horizon, the group decided to focus on more down-to-earth projects, releasing the cassette-only *From Belfast With Love* demo on the Warzone label. Petesy grew more and more involved with the Warzone, where he would be a collective member until the group's finish in 2003.

Petesy: "The original Warzone Collective was the people involved in organizing gigs and playing in bands in the mid-80s. I was involved because I was doing both at the time. Eventually the collective went on to establish Giro's, a.k.a. the Warzone Centre. Giro's was established in 1986 and kept going until 2003. During that time it ran practice rooms, a recording studio, an arts/screenprint workshop, a cafe/drop-in (which itself was a focus of activity for a multitude of campaign groups and events), and a venue which promoted more bands than you could shake a stick at. The place was established because Belfast needed a place with a DIY ethos where people could feel a sense of ownership. It closed because Belfast seemingly doesn't need that anymore. In between, it trudged along, trying to be as inclusive as possible, sometimes managing, sometimes not. What it did do, though, was prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that collective action, although a pain in the arse to work with, is the most effective way of people making a difference to theirs and others' lives and situations. Vagaries are the best I can do here, I'm afraid, as trying to encapsulate 17 years of dedication of a huge number of people in a few sentences is impossible. Write to your local punk his/herstorian and get him/her to lobby Warzone for a publication charting its his/herstory!"

Touring was also passed on.

Petesy: "Not at all, in fact. The record, to us, was just something you could gloat over with your mates, as opposed to a product that had to be promoted or an ideological statement that had to be spread. That's not to say that the sentiments expressed on the record didn't matter to us, but we were more concerned with keeping the scene in Belfast going. Later, there were a few excursions to England to play some gigs (organized and otherwise!)."

Despite having left Mortarhate behind, 1986 would be one of the busiest years for the band. The first effort would be a track on a compilation 7" called *You Are Not Alone*, the first effort from Words of Warning – a compilation of anarcho punk from around the UK including Oi Polloi, a group called Symbol of Freedom, and Hex, whose members would go on to form HDQ and Leatherface.

That classic compilation was followed up with a second cassette album on Warzone titled *And All the Birdies Sang...* Wanting to do a more proper recording, they made a plan to do a record project with Toxic Waste that they were in control of. It was also a chance to include their new friends in the up-and-coming band Asylum.

Petesy: "We spent quite a lot of time with Toxic Waste and became quite good friends with most of them. Apart from that, there was quite a lot of contact between the local bands at the time who supported each other through coming to each other's gigs, sharing equipment, and practicing together. After Toxic Waste, Asylum would have been the other band we shared a lot in common with.

"...A bunch of mates who were a part of the original collective and actually contributed most of the gear for collective gigs. Asylum was more of a fun band, although they had a serious side to their lyrics too. It's a pity they didn't get into the studio a bit more, as they were one of the best bands about Belfast at the time."

The result was a three way split LP released on Warzone.

Petesy: "Yep, that was the *We Will Be Free* album. It was negotiated between Roy from Toxic Waste and Steve Brown from Jungle Records (Mortarhate's funder) and was originally supposed to be just Asylum and Toxic Waste until Stalag muscled their way in!"

These were probably the best Stalag 17 recordings, with their tracks "Ready When You Are," "Sofa Head," "Cause Without War," and "Yet Another Love Song." Along with the great punk songs with barked, though melodic vocals, was the oddest cover of "Cornbread, Peas and Black Molasses" by 60s

blues legends Sonny Terry and Brownie McGhee.

With a second wave of anarcho punk coming from England, Stalag 17 and Warzone were of course keen to help as well as share ideas with new groups, leading to visits from Chumbawamba and what would be one of the most talked-about controversies of the time.

Petesy: "Having come from an Irish Republican background, I was no stranger to the idea of the politics of resistance. Within the broader spectrum of political thought, as well as within Irish Republicanism, there were many varying theories on the root of the troubles and their possible solution. So many, in fact, that they factionalized and feuded and they killed one another over differences of opinion of the hows and whys of the situation—or to be more blunt, over power issues.

"It seemed that everyone wanted their noses in the trough but very few were willing to actually do something to move things forward. That's a very wide sweep at a very complicated situation, but that's how I viewed things at the time. To me, the anarcho-punk movement at least provided a forum where you could share opinions without fear of violence. I was one of the anarchists who slagged off Chumbawamba, or rather certain members of the band, who felt they were more in touch with the situation here than we were. Without going into the nitty gritty details, it's enough to say that the Warzone Collective felt that it was getting trendy for British anarchists to support the Irish armed struggle. Whilst not everyone in the collective found the concept of armed resistance to tyranny morally reprehensible, we did feel that a balanced view and some experience of the situation might help in justifying revolutionary violence. I met a couple of the Chumbas at the 1 in 12 club in Bradford one night and all I had to say to them was, 'If you lived there (Belfast) you'd probably think differently.' To which they replied, 'Yeah, you're probably right.' Fair enough summing-up, I suppose."

Unfortunately, the band was constantly in a state of falling apart. From the start they had lived through seven line-ups, with Petesy being the only constant. Even he would move from bass to vocals to drums and back whenever needed. They would release two more cassettes, *Erection '87* in 1987 and *Seventeen from Seventeen* in 1990, both on Warzone. The band was mostly done by the end of the decade.

Petesy: "It had run its course. Sorry, no musical differences or big fallouts! Although it was said at the time that when Molloy joined a band they were sure to split up—but I still don't believe that."

Not slowing down, Petesy went on to form the amazing FUAL who released a near perfect LP, *Fuck Up And Live* on Meantime.

Petesy: "To the best of my knowledge, none of the past members of Stalag got involved in any other bands. After Stalag, I went on to form FUAL and have been in too many bands to list ever since. I'm still in regular touch with a few ex-members and I see most of the others now and again."

With the great legacy of both of those bands, Petesy is still pretty quick to put it all in harsh perspective.

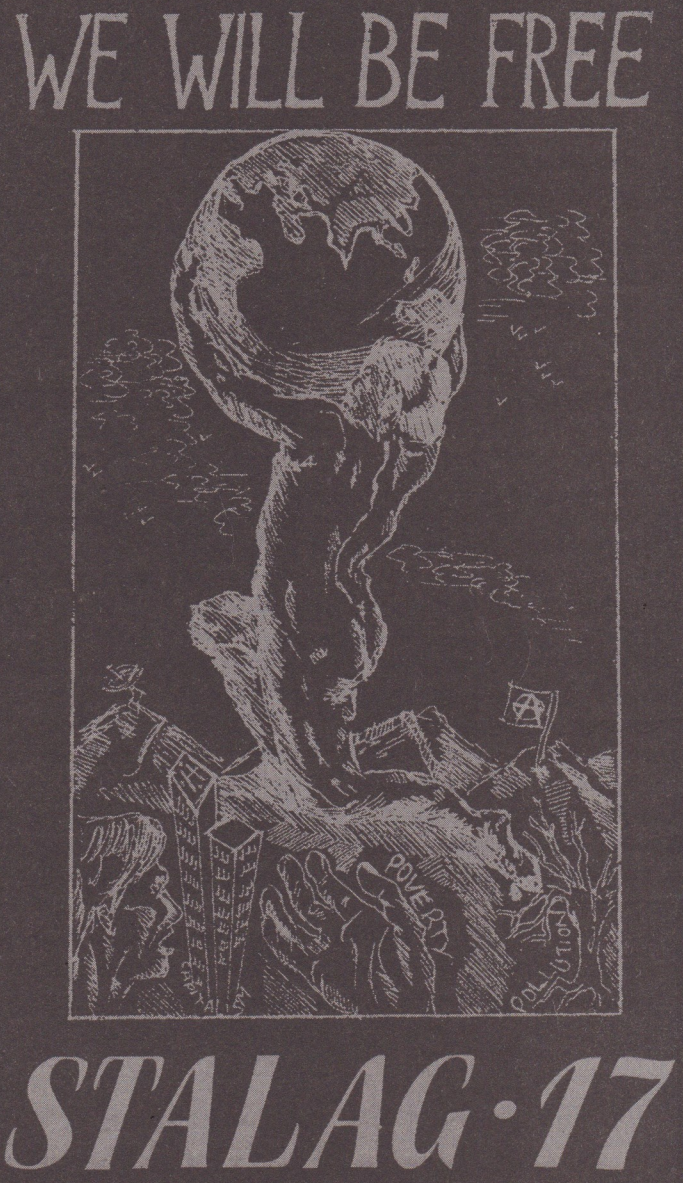
Petesy: "It was a band and nothing more. We did contribute to the overall sense that there was a positive movement for change within punk, and as such I'm sure we raised awareness with some people. But at the end of the day, it was just rock 'n' roll and most of the good stuff that mattered happened beyond what we did on stage or on record."

More recently, he's been playing in the band Shame Academy, which is becoming something of an all-star punk ensemble.

Petesy: "Shame Academy started life as a project. I got together with Brian Young from Rudi and Greg Cown from the Outcasts to work on a set of retro-punk songs, mostly Rudi and the Outcasts, to play at the launch of the book *It Makes You Wanna Spit.* The book is about punk in the north of Ireland from 1977 until 1982 and we thought, and the authors Sean O'Neill and Guy Trelford agreed, it would be a nice touch to have people from the scene back then playing at the launch. Combat Rock Records in France asked us to record an album, which we did, and it sort of continued from there. Having said that, we are not, and don't intend to be, a full-time band, just something to have a bit of fun with."

It may all just be in fun. But the meaning still remains, for him and probably for many former members of the Warzone Collective.

Petesy: "Considering how little has changed in the world, apart from things getting worse, I feel more connected to these ideas than I ever did."



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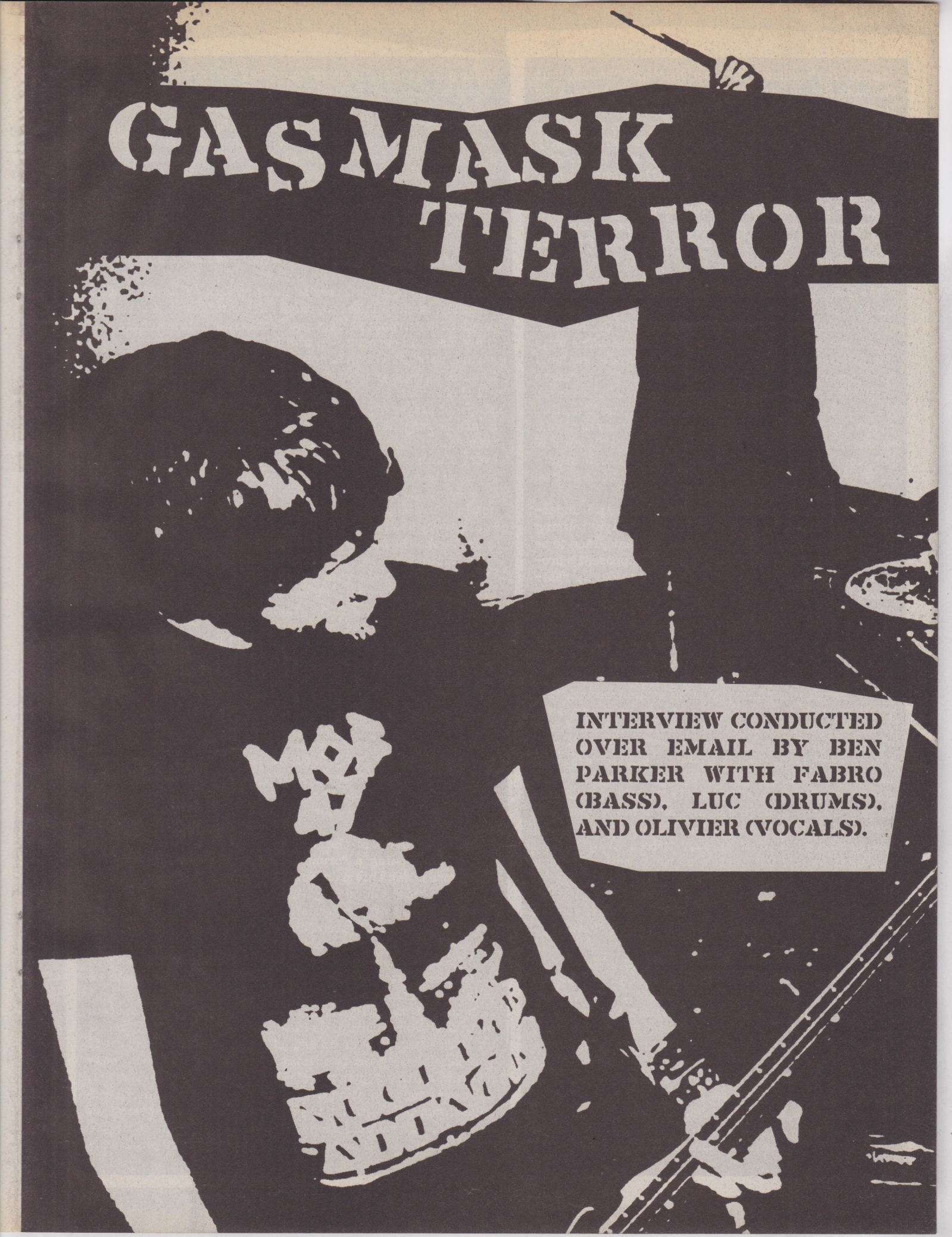

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED OVER EMAIL BY BEN PARKER WITH FABRO (BASS), LUC (DRUMS), AND OLIVIER (VOCALS).

France isn't known for its hardcore bands, but Gasmask Terror have a record on a Danish label, sing in English and Swedish, and carry on a long tradition of international D-beat stretching from Disarm to Diatribe to Framtid. Their style is refreshingly devoid of both "epic" meanderings and crust-core sludge. Politically driven, musically light on their feet, and (as evidenced in this interview) a spirited bunch of lads, Gasmask Terror have an EP on Plague Bearer and have been playing the European hardcore circuit. Check 'em out, but do not ask them if they've seen Les Miz.

MRR: How did you guys come together to play raw punk?

Fabro: About two years ago, Luc and I were in Daymare, which was more of a dark melodic crust band. The band was falling apart, and we decided to start a new band in a rawer Scandi-crust vein. I asked to Shiran to play guitar because I knew he was a total Discharge addict. Olivier was living in Lille and was planning to move to Bordeaux. We only knew him from email and messageboards, but he seemed to be both funny and politically-minded, so we asked him to join. We started to practice in October or November of 2003 and we played our first gig in January.

MRR: Tell me about the scene over there. As I understand, since some great band is always touring Europe instead of here, it must be a great place to be punk. After all, Youth of Today are supposedly broken up, and yet they seemingly have taken up residence in the Faubourg Saint-Germain. As a f0urther question, why aren't there more French bands that "make it' over here?

Luc: Apart from a lot of Swedish bands who embark on North American tours before they even get to play in Europe (Germany doesn't count of course. Germany is not a European country by punk standards and is a whole continent of its own), I think it's obvious for most European bands to tour their own land first. Think globally, act locally right? Touring here may be easier than in the US: there's a smaller distance between cities, and the DIY network seems more focused as a whole. The French band Coche Bomba toured South America for six or seven weeks last summer, now *that* is something far more challenging than doing a US tour! We only toured in Spain and Portugal so far, but there's so many more European countries I'd love to play in.

Fabro: Most of the time American bands don't tour all of Europe, just Germany—and Holland and Denmark too, since they're near Germany. Here's something you should know: there is more than just one country in Europe, OK? Very few American bands play in the south of Europe (Spain, Portugal, Greece, etc.) which sucks! In our city (in the southwest of France), touring bands are usually well-paid and well-treated, but there are fewer and fewer bands touring around here every year. Regarding French bands, there are a lot of good ones but I think American punks don't care about them, and so they don't ask them to tour the USA, which is too bad. Some French bands have toured your country, like La Fraction, Amanda Woodward, and The Fatals. I got some good feedback, so I hope American punks will be more curious about French bands (and bands from other countries that are not Sweden or Japan) in the near future! Oh, and I just read the France scene report in the June issue of *MRR*, and it is so far removed from reality: the bands listed have been broken up for a long time in the worst case, and have nothing to do with DIY punk in the best case. The same goes with zines. It's too bad, because there are tons of cool DIY punk bands right now (Skityouth Army, Youssouf Today, Ken Park, Chaos ZZZ, Drunken Vengeance Bastard, Face Up To It!, Decombres, Belle Epoque, HHM...) and really interesting and passionate zines (*Black Lung*, *Mononoke*, *Bavardages*, *Full of Shit*, *Ratcharge*, *Mes Mots Ont La Parole*, or *Worlds At War* just to name a few).

Olivier: The DIY punk scene in Bordeaux is quite shitty, actually. We have like five bands, all involving the same few people. The turnout at shows is decreasing dramatically and there are no newcomers in sight. But you can find tons of garage/rock'n'roll bands here if that is your shit. Regarding touring Europe: yeah, it must be a blast to tour Europe since all these great US bands like 25 Ta Life, Youth Of Today, and Slapshot play every single year in France. This kind of band makes me rethink my point of view concerning the removal of every single border in this world and the dismantlement of every single country, so that these bands can be kept out. I'm going to be a bit rude right now but I do think the reputation of the way gigs are organized in the US (no food, no alcohol, no place to sleep, no breakfast) is not very attractive. I don't really care about losing money on a tour, and in my opinion touring should be the opportunity to share something more than music, but if touring in the US means playing a set and then sleeping in the van, that is not what I expect from an alternative community. Please don't take my words as an absolute certitude, I know things have been getting better for a few years. Please prove me wrong.

MRR: How did you come together with Plague Bearer? Do you think Denmark's status as the "it" country will rub off on the 7"?

Luc: I've been in touch with Jakob and Tommas of Kick'n'Punch for a few years, trading records and stuff. I sent Jakob our demo and he liked it. Simple as that. It's totally an honor to have him release our record, as the KNP/Plague Bearer/Hjernespind empire is probably my favorite label in Europe right now, and run by excellent people. It's sad to say, but yes, I guess a lot of people are more likely to check us out due to the fact it's on this specific label.

MRR: In my review of the record, I note that you guys sound as far from being a "crust" band as possible, given your influences. Was this a conscious decision on anyone's part?

Olivier: I just want to play the music I love. You can call it D-beat, thrashcore, emoviolence; I call it punk. Today there is a very fashionable trend about crust/D-beat, and we have to take the piss because we're part of this trend. In ten (five, two?) years nobody will remember that French band except maybe those few people who really care about the music we play and not the studded jackets we wear.

Luc: None of us really live up to the crust standards indeed. We take showers, some of us have jobs, pay rent...and three of us don't even drink or do drugs! How's that for crust cred? The name of the band is obviously a total pisstake—it doesn't mean shit, it's just two clich crust words put together. Same goes for the artwork. This scene is so homogenized and so serious, it's hard not to become a self-parody every now and then. On a musical standpoint, our chord changes may be faster than a lot of D-beat bands, giving it more of a hard-

core sound I guess. When we started the band, the sound we were aiming at was the Totalitär school of riffing, more than continental Euro-crustcore à la, say, Hiatus or whatever.

MRR: So, you guys sing in two languages, neither of them French. What's up with that?

Olivier: I actually already write French lyrics for several other bands I'm in, so I don't feel the necessity to do so in Gasmask Terrör. Moreover, I think the English language is much more appropriate to our style, because I want to have short, violent and direct lyrics. I'm really fond of the Discharge haiku-style lyrics, which appear to me as a funeral statement that nothing can counter.

MRR: Does "Oath of the Shitheads" have anything to do with the lyrics (which are straight Discharge), or could you simply not pass up that title?

Olivier: Every song title off the demo was a kind of joke, you know all this "war is atrocity/dead bodies in the streets" thing. So I guess there's no deep meaning in that title except it could maybe mean that the people in power seem to do their best to destroy that world (in terms of starting wars, polluting, etc.) as if it were a promise our leaders have made to themselves, which I think is kind of scary. Anyway, most of the lyrics deal with self-emancipation from our racist, sexist, and homophobic culture. To ruin a society that sees us as cannon fodder, labor for factories, as one more bank account or vote for the same old fuckers, those who know shit about my life and the way I'm living it.

MRR: What is your number one Swedish hardcore EP, excluding Anti-Cimex or Shitlickers?

Fabro: Easy! Totalitär's *Spela Bort Allt du Har* and the Mob 47 EP.

Olivier: Bathory's *Under the Sign of the Black Mark* LP

Luc: Holy fuck...I've been a svensk räpunk sucker forever, it's so hard to pick only one record. I'd say the Mob 47 EP may be my favorite, as it was the first one I ever heard in the late 80s on a mixtape, backed with Anti-Cimex's *Wictims of a Bombraid* EP.

MRR: Do you guys do any other bands, labels, zines, etc. we should know about?

Olivier: I play guitar in Holy Fuckin' Shit! (fast hardcore/punk Los Crudos rip-off), I hold the (night)sticks in Police Charged (raw noise punk attack) in order to O-beat the fucking coppers, and I have some solo projects as well (shitnoisegrind and black metal). Besides that, I do a newsletter called *Soft Pulp* (as opposed to hard core) with my friend Nicolas, and a zine on my own named *Ravensdom*. Fabro screams his lungs out in Holy Fuckin' Shit! and rocks the Flying V in Police Charged. Luc does the drumming shit in your grandfather's band, also known as Face Up To It!, he sings as well (or as bad, it's up to you) in Police Charged, and he takes care of *K rgn ve*, a newsletter dedicated to bullet belts and D-takt. Shiran plays in Monarch (666 ton sludge), Rainbow Of Death (pouvoir violent a la Tetsuo) and George Bitch Jr. (ride-the-lightning fastcore).

Luc : I also run a small label called Ratbone Records.

MRR: Balzac or Zola?

Luc: Fuck all! I'm allergic to a lot of the shit you're being force-fed at school. I'm into Cioran, even though he wasn't exactly French. I love to read (more American authors than French ones, mind you), but the romantic clich s about frogs being literate snobs are so old! I don't drum with bread baguettes either, and no—that's not a beret on my head!

Fabro: McDonalds or Burger King? Bush or Kerry? Fuck cliches! Hey, *Amelie* is just a movie OK, all French people don't live in Paris and don't spend their time reading Victor Hugo books in cafes!

Luc: Actually, though, if I had to chose between Balzac and Zola, I'd say Zola all the way. I just couldn't stand the little I've read by Balzac, it made me sick. Years of reading that kind of shit at school just made it unbearable. Haha. I like American literature a lot more, for sure...

Olivier: *Ratcharge* zine, but unless you learn to speak French you'll never know, dude...

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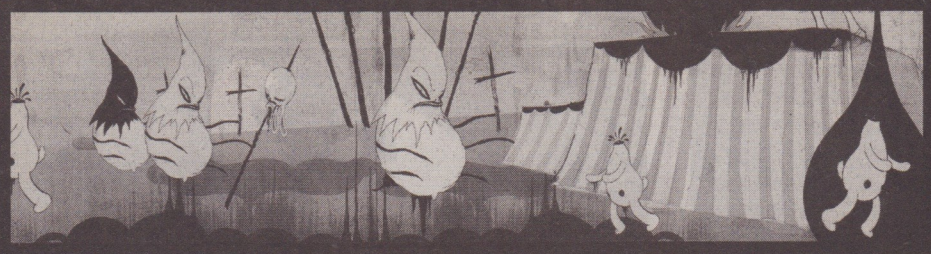

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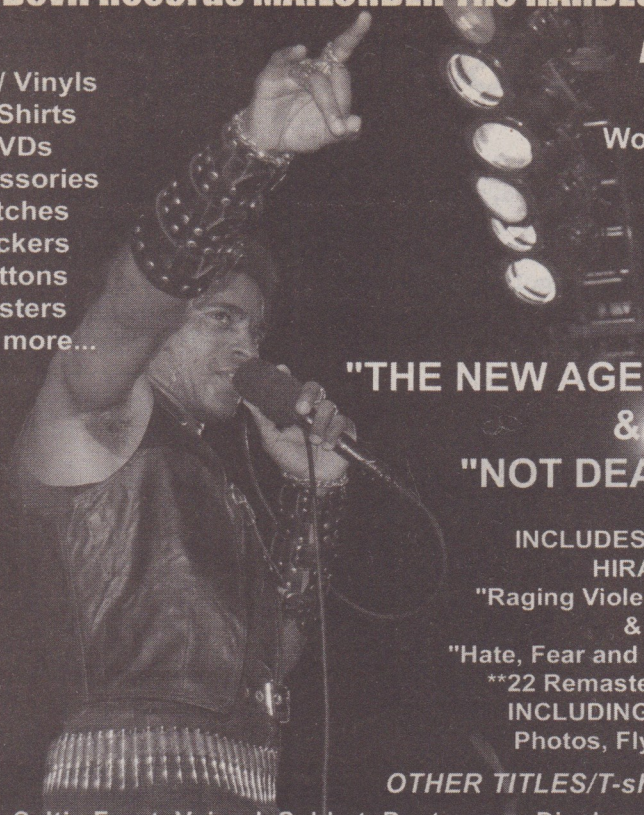

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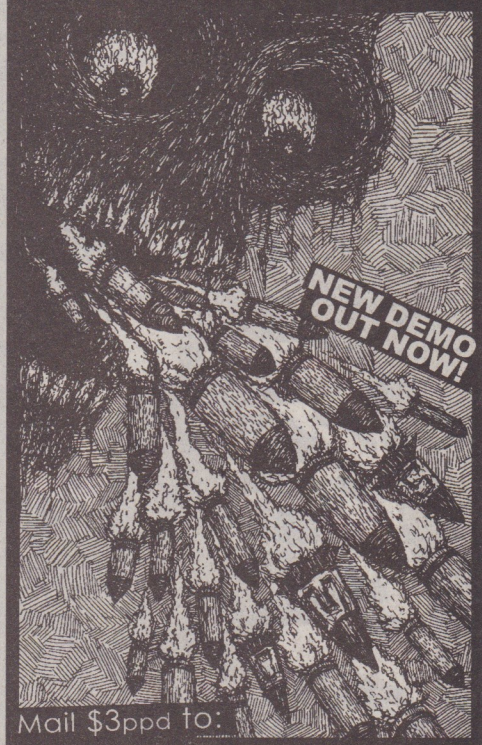

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I LOVED RANDY "BISCUIT" TURNER...

...We met in Austin back in 1976 selling flowers on the street, then later there he was on stage at Raul's club in 1980, belting it out with the Big Boys. They were always so good, so real, and Biscuit made that happen. The Dicks were never so nice; Biscuit and the Big Boys were. He and I remained friends through the years becoming closer and closer it seemed. When I would go to Austin in my different bands I would always stay with him—it was like going back home. I feel such a deep loss at his passing, like the loss of a brother and a musical soul mate—a really deep loss. He was one of a kind and a good friend. Things will never be the same in Austin or anywhere else good people are loved.

—Gary Floyd

PHOTO: BILL DANIELS

Randy "Biscuit" Turner, singer of the pioneering punk band The Big Boys, passed away on Thursday, August 18, 2005 at age 56. Turner had been planning an art show at the local video store/gallery Pedazo Chunk on Friday. When he didn't show up the day before to set up the art, friends became worried. Their worst fears were confirmed when police found him dead in his home. According to the *Austin Chronicle*, the initial autopsy report attributes the cause of death to "gastrointestinal hemorrhage due to cirrhosis associated with chronic alcohol abuse."

Turner's art was never installed in the gallery, and the scheduled opening was transformed into a wake. Friends brought paintings and photographs and hung them around the room where the artwork would have been. A crowd of a few hundred admirers and pals gathered to comfort each other and share stories about their old friend.

Everyone who had the pleasure of meeting Biscuit had a story to share. Once, over a hot dog lunch, my girlfriend mentioned to him that she had just started up a band in town, to which he replied, "You go, girl!" Words of encouragement are rarely so elegant. Jason, owner of Sound on Sound records (which borrowed its name from the brilliant Big Boys song) gave Biscuit a reissue of his old band that he hadn't seen. The next day, he showed up at the store with a xeroxed stack of flyers, drawings, and stories that he'd done over the years.

Standing outside Pedazo Chunk a continual stream of these stories could be overheard. Unlike most cities, which don't reveal a trace of their underground history without some digging, Austin embraces it. This was evident from the crowd that gathered to pay homage to Biscuit, which included a representative cross-section of the city's residents ranging from aging tattooed bikers to straight-laced families. The common thread between us was that we were all touched by Biscuit.

Since moving to Austin from rural Texas in the 1970s, Turner has been an omnipresent creative force. Born for the stage, he has fronted The Big Boys, Cargo Cult, Swine King, and most recently the Texas Biscuit Bombs, as well as entertained crowds at the Roller Derby under the stage name "Dr Noodles." A true artist, his paintings and collages are densely packed with bright colors and found objects. They are bizarre, inspired, and undeniably original. His artistic vision was endless and everything, including his home, was subject to a makeover. His house is legendary as it is a giant work of art, every nook and cranny decorated. As Exene Cervenka said in a recent article about Biscuit, " His house is the best art gallery in town."

In my own life, the role of the Big Boys is unrivaled by that of any other band. I found them as I was just discovering punk rock, when an older record store employee handed over a CD of theirs and told me that I needed it. What I heard blew me away and cut to the core of why I was interested in punk. The band managed to express a complete range of emotion in their music and lyrics. They could be introspective, humorous, bizarre, silly, and spiteful; they used the band to express exactly what they were feeling. Their honesty was matched by their obvious passions for skateboarding, DIY ethics, and just plain havin' a good time.

My eyes opened a little wider when I realized that punk songs didn't have to be angry. The Big Boys wrote their angry songs, but they had more depth than that, and sometimes it was OK to just have fun. The band paid no mind to the "rules" of punk that dictated all bands must take everything seriously. They did things as few others did including dressing in elaborate costumes, and incorporating a horn section into their sets. Gigs often ended with the crowd on stage dancing along with the band; there was no separation between the crowd and the band, everyone together made up the experience and was important. As they always reminded their fans: "Now go start your own band!"

More than anything, the Big Boys taught me that there was no mold for what punk should be. Punk rock got a lot more fun when I realized that there was no template for how to act: that you could say and do what you want, that you *should* say and do what you want. It's such a simple and obvious idea, but it's also one that's easy to forget.

The Big Boys were larger than life, and larger than punk, so their impact went beyond the patrons of Raul's, an Austin club that they frequented, and record collectors. The band, collectively and individually, has done their part to influence Austin's culture. In addition to inspiring countless bands to start up over the years, Biscuit's artwork appears in local galleries as well as newspapers and magazine. In an ironic twist, Austin's weekly paper, *The Chronicle*, had a cover story on the artist and upcoming exhibit that hit the streets the day he passed away.

There is a small sign on the door of Sound on Sound records with a photocopy of a self-portrait that Biscuit took a few years back with "R.I.P." written underneath. Tributes such as this have begun to appear around town as people are coming to terms with the city's great loss. While these signs will eventually come down, the true impact of Biscuit on his community will linger on forever. People will continue to start their own bands, make their own art, and follow their hearts. It's easy once you do it, but sometimes we need someone like Biscuit to remind us of that.

—Dave Hyde

PHOTO:
KEVIN VIROBIK-ADAMS

THE STEPBROTHERS

IN 2001, AFTER AN EIGHT-YEAR ABSENCE FROM PLAYING MUSIC, MIKE MARICONDA (RAUNCH HANDS, DEVIL DOGS) DECIDED THAT ENOUGH WAS ENOUGH. HE GOT TOGETHER WITH SEAN "SONNY" MORALES (TITZ), PAT PESTORIUS (STINGERS), JEFF LINTON (DAMN TIMES), AND MATT SMITH (WHITE HEAT), TO BECOME THE STEPBROTHERS. THERE WAS NO CONCEPTUALIZING ANY "THEME" OR "GENRE"–THIS BAND WOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE ON SOUL, SURF, GARAGE, COUNTRY, AND, MORE IMPORTANTLY, ALL OF THESE STYLES SIMULTANEOUSLY: SOMETHING ONCE CALLED ROCK 'N' ROLL. THERE WOULD BE NO NEED FOR SIDE PROJECTS, AS THIS IS A NO-HOLDS-BARRED COMBO WITH AN EMPHASIS ON QUALITY SONGS, SKILLFUL MUSICIANSHIP, AND EXCITING, SAVAGE PERFORMANCES.

MRR: Where'd your name come from, and has anyone asked you guys, "Are you really stepbrothers?"

MATT: Well, Mike and Sean's mom married my dad. And then my dad cheated on their mom with Jeff's mom. Jeff's mom got pregnant and my dad decided to divorce Mike and Sean's mom and marry Jeff's mom, whom he impregnated. And that's where Pat comes into the picture. Our family life is fucked up, and all our moms hate each other. But when we pick up our instruments, it's all water under the bridge.

MIKE: It was a cross between a high-stepping yeller and a brother.

MRR: How'd The Stepbrothers come to be? Did you guys play together before in other bands?

SEAN: We were spliced into a vector of a virus and here we are. Raunch Hands, Titz, Damn Times, Incredible Vernacular, and White Heat.

JEFF: None of us had ever played rock together before this, but Sean and Mike were in a reggae band together in the mid-nineties (a little known fact) called Rasta Pasta (Mike's Italian and Sean's Jamaican).

MRR: Your artwork for Baby It's Over is award-winning. Do chicks with guns turn you on? It looks like you guys have hand-burned holes into those inserts—was that a pain in the ass?

MATT: No, we burned them on the ground, not on our asses.

MIKE: Billy Bishop did the silk screening and it was conceptualized in house. We did burn the holes ourselves.

PAT: No pain is too great for our fans.

SEAN: You'd have to ask Mike about the chicks/guns thing. We did burn holes in the inserts, but it was more fun than it would appear. Thanks for the compliment.

JEFF: We burned those holes with Mike's index finger—that fucking thing is always smoking from his hot licks!

MRR: Jeff is the newest member of the Stepbrothers, but he didn't play on the album, right? I also notice Willie was thanked in the liner notes. Was Willie Nelson in the band at some point?

SEAN: Will played on the record, but chose to leave shortly after recording. Jeff is the newest member all right. Mr. Nelson is too busy opening steak houses in the area.

JEFF: Jeff is not the newest member of the band. Jeff has been around from the beginning, and without him The Stepbrothers would never have gotten this far. It is true, however, that Jeff does not play on the record. This is only because his musical ethic includes a belief that music must be performed in order to be authentic. He also refuses to have his picture taken: all photos portraying him are fakes.

MRR: Since you are on such a measly little label, I'm assuming you guys aren't doing this stuff for fame and fortune right?

SEAN: Es verdad.

MIKE: Wrong—we want it all. Master plan, step one: number one single; step two: number one album; step three: Dictators of America; step four: open a pizzeria on the Jersey shore.

JEFF: Our A&R guy promised us that the label would be able to provide us with all the German hefewiezen we could drink. This was the rationale behind the label we finally signed with. The bidding war was brutal—several majors actually offered us Germany itself but ultimately we decided the beer was the only good thing about the deal, and since Licorice Tree had integrity to boot, we went with them. Unfortunately, the beer has only materialized once. We're still waiting on like 110 cases of Paulener.

MRR: I hear that some people get upset or are confused when you don't stick to a certain genre or sound with your songs, and they end up all over the map. You've got a doo-wop song, some screamers, and a new gospel number, for example. Where are these songs coming from, what are the influences, etc.?

PAT: There's no telling what's going to come of our sound. We like it, we play it. We even play some shit we don't like, just to make sure.

SEAN: I've heard that too, and I don't care. We're a rock 'n' roll group that likes all of the different eras of it. We're too old and like too much stuff to be playing to one crowd of blockheads. Three of us have worked in record stores for way too long, so we took advantage of it. I like too many bands to disclose here, but a couple off the top would be the Kinks, Love, Beefheart, James Brown, Bo Diddley, Flamin' Groovies (especially everything Roy Loney has done), Ramones, Devo, Sparks, Ike Turner, Ray Price, Bill Fay, John Fahey, Fred McDowell, Junior Kimbrough, R.L. Robins (pre-Coasters), Wreckless Eric, Howlin' Wolf, George Jones, NRBQ, Link Wray, and all the other big names.

MIKE: It's true that most people get confused but most people are confused anyway. No one here is into genre bands. As Louie Armstrong put it, there are only two kinds of music: good and bad. Like with all good music that's been made, why only do one thing? To me, that's like going to eat Chinese food every night. Why only eat one kind of food every night? Why play only surf music when it was only around for six months in 1963? Why pick that as a sole genre? How can you be a band that covers garage music from 1966, and put out records over a ten-year period? Same with '77 punk: even Johnny Rotten didn't want to play it for more than six months, so why are bands like Rancid trying to make a career out of it?

JEFF: Its true, people hate us for that, but it's where we stand man. I mean, we'd rather have people hate us for who we are than love us for who we're not. As for where the songs come from, we steal them from people who don't realize they're worth anything.

MATT: The Stepbrothers are like a musical gumbo. We all bring a different ingredient to the pot, or a different spice to the roux. In the end though, it all comes together, and it's mouth-waterin.'

MRR: There are also a variety of singers in the group. Does everyone come up with their own songs and sing them?

PAT: It's pretty wide open, but Mike and Sean come in with the most material. As for who sings, it just depends on who feels the songs and who wants to sing it. We have no rules.

SEAN: Mike, Pat, and I take turns singin' our stuff. We all write and contribute to each other's songs.

MIKE: Yeah, everyone contributes. There is no main writer or singer.

MRR: Care to discuss your South by Southwest experience this year?

MATT: The club we played was run by douchebags with Betty Page tattoos, and they made us pay for water. Also, there was a high school kid running sound who was proud that he was able to make my drums sound like Slipknot. But what do you expect when the name of the club is the Velvet Spade?

SEAN: The free day shows are where it's at. People are actually still awake and not comatose. We really turned it on for the people.

MIKE: We met Neville Skelley from Liverpool, our Brian Epstein. He promised that if we wore leather pants he'd make us famous.

MRR: How's the Austin music scene these days?

MIKE: Competitive. Too many bands playing on any given night and only so many people to see those bands.

SEAN: I wouldn't call it a scene. There are pockets of all kinds of good stuff though. All kinds of talent here.

MATT: I heard two guys from Interpol were moving down here from New York. What does that tell you?

MRR: Are there any really memorable shows you played, and why are they so memorable?

PAT: I'm holding this spot for a little bullfighting arena in the old hinterland.

MIKE: I have a tendency to remember the bad shows: all the ones I quit at.

MATT: Four shows come to mind: the two we broke up at and the subsequent two reunion shows.

SEAN: We've been there and have survived. We communicate on a different level on stage now.

MRR: Are there any new bands out that you really like right now? Or any you can't stand?

MIKE: I like Reigning Sound and Redd Volkart. I hate the crop of new bands that are talking about how great Judas Priest is, or anybody who tries to reference 80s metal. The only good groups to come out of the 80s were from the Minneapolis scene: Hüsker Dü, Soul Asylum, etc.

MATT: [sings lyrics from Soul Asylum's "Runaway Train"]

SEAN: Time Flys, The Crack Pipes, whatever John Schooley is doing (Hard Feelings and his one-man band), The Spits, The Cuts, Sharon Jones, and the Dap-Kings.

JEFF: The Holy Ghost Revival is everything a band should be and more. They're so good that even MRR knows about them.

MRR: You are all so pretty. Who gets the most action?

JEFF: Pat. No, Sean. No, Matt. No, me. No, Mike... fuck, I don't know.

PAT: Those are fond days to remember, but we're too old for that shit now.

MIKE: The gay guy—we won't tell you which one he is.

MATT: Mike's the oldest, and he's married. He doesn't even bother making notches on the headboard of his bed anymore.

SEAN: We're all taken, but I'm the coolest, in case you were wondering.

MORE INFO:
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INTERVIEW BY CHAD KELLY. PICTURES BY JOSEPH RICH.

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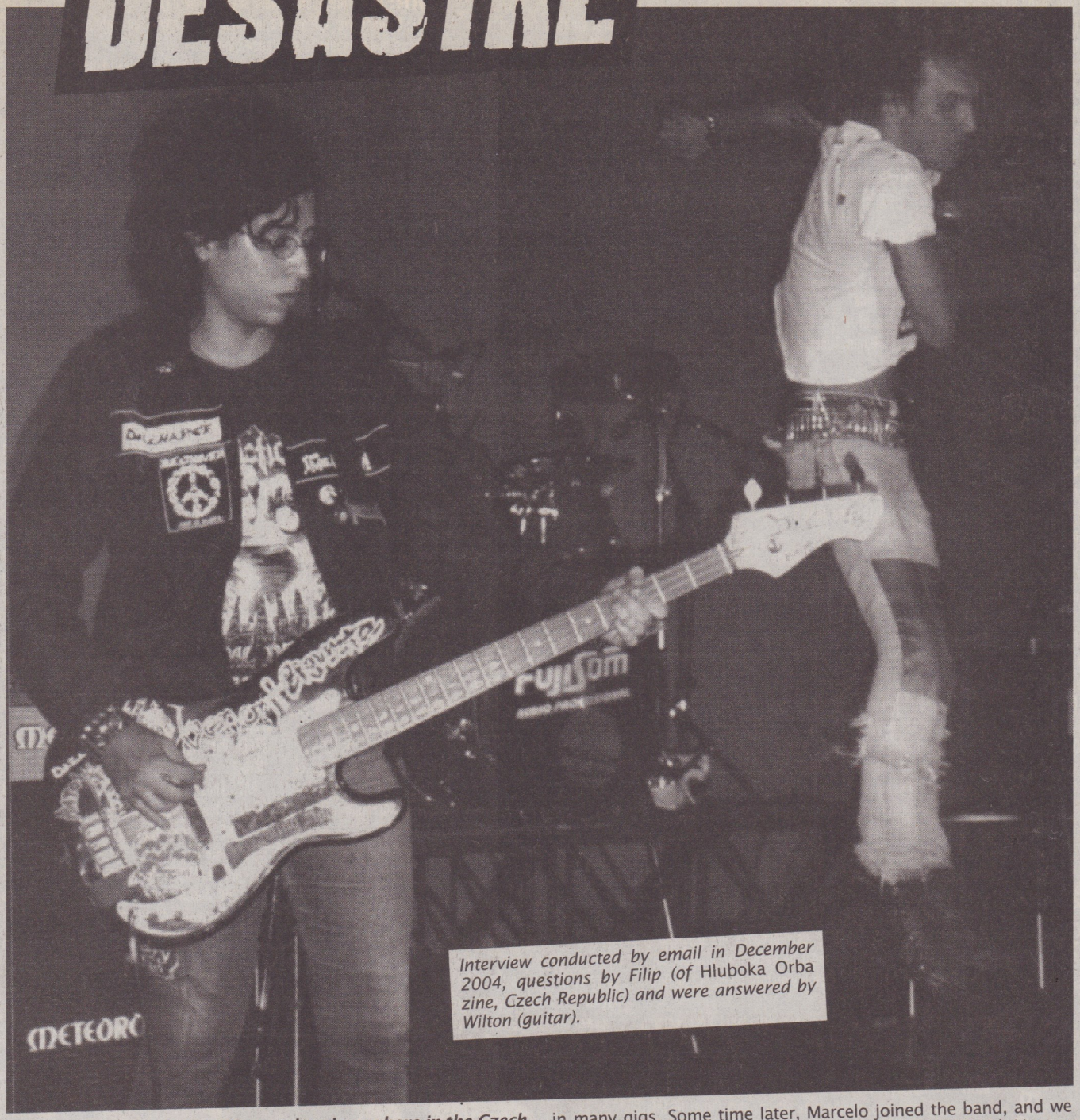


Interview conducted by email in December 2004, questions by Filip (of Hluboka Orba zine, Czech Republic) and were answered by Wilton (guitar).

Desastre is not such a well known band over here in the Czech Republic, so for starters tell us more about your history—when you started, which bands influenced you in the beginning, who is in the band now, how you would describe the kind of noise you make to somebody who has never heard you, etc.

Wilton: We started the band in 1996 to play Dis-core hardcore. At this time it was me, Diana, and two Neurose Urbana guys, but this line up broke up after a short time and the band stopped for some time. After some months, I decided to continue the band, so Diana started to play drums—before she had played bass. We came back not to be a Dis band but a punk band with influences from Swedish, Japanese, UK, and Italian HC too—bands like Anti-Cimex, Fear Of War, Disarm, Mob 47, Broken Bones, Eu's Arse, Lobotomia, etc. In December 1997 we recorded our first demo tape, called *Panic, Death, Fear...Real Nightmare.* These tracks were in English, though after that all of our releases have been in Portuguese. On this record, Diana also played the bass, and for gigs some guy helped us. Fofão from Besthoven supported us in many gigs. Some time later, Marcelo joined the band, and we recorded new trax that were released on a split 7" EP with Lixo on Sin Fronteras Records (USA). Later, Marcelo left and Cláudio came on to play the bass. We didn't record anything with him, but we played many gigs. After a long while, Diana and Cláudio left the band too, and other guys joined who are playing till today. Except for Hassan, who is the newest member. Before, I played guitar and vocals; now I'm only doing vocals. So, today Desastre is: Wilton D—Vocals, Thiago Rato—Guitar, Hassan—Guitar, Danny—Bass and Fabiano—Drums. We play HC punk with influences from 80s punk and also thrash and heavy rock music from the 80s.

I would say that the biggest influence for Desastre has to be the old Brazilian band Armagedom—would you agree? Do you know these guys? I know that you also played together, tell us more about it. There are a good number of old punk bands reforming and playing again in Brazil—how honest is it?

Wilton: Yeah, more or less. For me the biggest Brazilian influence was Lobotomia. But Armagedom was also a big influence. I know

the Armagedom guys. I organized a gig with them here in my city in 2000. It was a good gig in an abandoned theatre—they're great people because they like to play and don't bore for being old punks!!! And they are interested in playing and not in money. Especially Javier, who is a really nice guy. Yeah, there are some bands playing again. I know that Lobotomia is playing again and other bands too. I don't know about all bands and their members. Brazil is a really big country and sometimes there's not much information. I don't know why these bands are playing again. Maybe because there's a fashion of old band bands coming back to play—haha! Many bands are playing again with only one original member but using the old name. I think that sometimes it would be better if they started a new band if they really want to play again!

Please describe each of your releases (demo, EPs, CD) to us, which one you like most, what new releases are you planning, etc?

Wilton: Our releases are *Panic, Death, Fear...Real Nightmare* demo (1997), *Funeral na Nova Ordem* split 7" EP w/Lixo (1999), *Mundo Velho* 7" EP (2001), *Pesadelo Real* CD (2003) (This CD has a LP version by Undislessed Records), and *8 Trax Attack* comp tape on Phobia Records. Last October we recorded seven new tracks and we're looking for a label to release it. I like all of our records. I think that all the records capture specific moments and thus hold something special for me.

Goiânia-Go—what kind of city it is? In which part of Brazil it can be found? Do you have big hardcore/punk scene in your city? Is it hard to be punk in your city?

Wilton: Goiânia is the capital of the Goiás country. Here live two million people. We have the problems of all Brazilian cities—violence, poverty, street kids, violent police, etc. We're in the center of Brazil—200 km from Brasília (the political capital) and 1000 km from São Paulo. Goiás is a state with traditions in farming, bulls, etc, so you can find some stupid cowboys in the streets. Here we have a big underground scene—the underground here is very united. There are many HC/punk bands but sometimes they aren't interested in having contact with or knowing more about the punk scene from around the world. Many bands start and break up really fast! There are always new bands. HC gigs here have 100-200 people. The majority of the time, though, gigs have more than one style of music. Gigs with metal, rock, and HC bands sometimes have 300-500 people. I don't have problems for being punk here. People here have more open minds than in other towns. Except for the police—they're shit in all the world! Goiânia is a good city. But sometimes is very boring, like all places!

I know that Neurose Urbana also comes from Gyn-go, and that you used to have some common band members. Can you tell us more about it? Also in the rest of Brazil there are/were other bands playing very similar music to yours—raw, dirty, and punk as fuck! Bands like Besthoven, Silencio Funebre, Lixo...are you friends with them? Are there any other bands you would recommend in this style in Brazil?

Wilton: Yeah, when Diana played in Desastre she also played bass in Neurose Urbana for some time. They are a good band. I used to not be their friend because we had some differences—sometimes we're friends, sometimes not—strange yes?! I don't know about the band but I think that they are gonna play again because some days back Ratão (the drummer) tried to go to Ireland but he was banished! Fuckin' shit!!! Yeah, Besthoven and Silencio Fúnebre is the same band. They changed the name for a time but are now back to the name to Besthoven! Lixo broke up in 2000 if I'm right. Afterwards the guitarist played drums for Nailbiter from the UK. We don't have many bands playing this style of HC/punk here in Brazil. I don't know. Recently I don't have many contacts here in Brazil—sometimes punks here give nausea! But we really don't have many bands. I can mention bands called Securitate, Contraste Bizarro, Scum Noise. We also have many fast/grind/HC bands, and NYHC too.

You used to have female drummer Diana (also playing for Neurose Urbana), I would say that it is pretty common for South American raw/fast hardcore bands (also Infect, I Shot Cyrus, Polikarpa Y Sus Viciosas, Social Chaos, Migra Violenta, etc.) to have female members in them. Here in the Czech Republic, when you have a female member it is mostly as a singer in a doom metal band, while in your part of the world women play drums, guitars, etc. I think that it is pretty interesting, especially considering that South America is often viewed as pretty sexist and much worse in attitudes towards women that our part of the world. Could you comment on this?

Wilton: We really have many women playing in HC bands here! Not only in HC, but in death/thrash metal and rock music in general. Here in my city there are many bands with women and many bands with only women in the rest of the country too. But here there are women in doom metal bands too—haha!!! Somes headbangers here are fucking macho, sexist, and stupid, more than in other parts of the world. Sexism here is really big. It's on TV all the time. Despite this, women in Brazil are very independent—especially after the 80s. Also, the HC and rock movement here is very political, especially with the teenagers. The majority of people have involvement with politics when they start in the HC scene. Maybe because of this women learn about equality, and don't accept being only one more woman in the scene. So the fight to be independent and play in a band is a way to show that women and men are equals. And it's really great when you see women playing guitar or drums in a band, and sometimes playing in bands with only women.

The so-called "War on Terrorism"—how does the recent world situation affect the politics of Brazil? Is there more police control, more propaganda bullshit in the media, more strict laws?

Wilton: Here in Brazil the war and the terror have been happening forever!!! The problems with terrorism in the USA and Europe only reflect in the economic situation. Here, some people have much and some others nothing. People here aren't interested in the USA's problems. Except for the economic situation—if it's bad, we're more than fucked. Brazilian politicians are all puppets of USA interests. Brazilians live with the constant terror of misery, traffic, and corruption. All the politicians don't want propaganda about terror—they want people to think that's all right and pretty!

What about the Discharge reunion? If they played in Brazil would you go? Do you get lots of foreign band gigs in your part of Brazil?

Wilton: Discharge played in Brazil this year. I didn't go because was Rat on vocals and not Cal. For me one of the best things in the band was Cal's performance and voice. So, without him it's boring! When Riistetyt came here for the first time I went in their gig in São Paulo and Santos and for the second time I went in Brasília. I'd love to see Discharge some day, but with Cal. I don't know their reason

for playing again, but Discharge was a big band and will be very exciting to see. Last Saturday we gigged here in Goiânia and we played "Hear Nothing See Nothing Say Nothing." Everyone in the band loves Discharge! Here in Goiânia we don't have many foreign bands playing. Sometimes comes some metal or indie band. Riistetyt and Força Macabra played—great gigs. I tried to organize gigs with them here but it wasn't possible!!! People are talking about Sodom and Nuclear Assault playing in Brasília-city—good, no?!

What about Desastre gigs? Do you play often? What does the usual place for your gigs looks a like? With which bands do you play most?

Wilton: We often play here. I can say that we play every month, and sometimes two times in one month. We play in many places—bars, university spaces, show houses, theaters, parks, houses, etc. We organize gigs too. Sometimes we organize gigs in our drummer's house too. Many bands play and we sell drinks for ten cents. It's a good party, especially because everybody stays drunk!!! With these parties, we have money for tickets, records, and equipment. As I said before, the underground here is very united. We play with many bands of different styles: metal, rock, indie. Sometimes we play gigs with only punk bands too—we're always playing!

There are plans for Desastre European tour in 2005 or 2006. What are your ideas about the European scene? What differences do you see between the scene here and in your country? Is it financially affordable for band like yours to come over here?

Wilton: Yeah, we want to do it! Financially affordable?! Ha! Certainty we're gonna lose lots of money with the tickets and more. I have a lot of information about the European scene, and I think it's great. For us, it's the opportunity to play for many different people, to get to know people, places, cities, and cultures, and to have new experiences. Here in Brazil it's hard to do a tour because the country is big. In Europe there are many places and many cities in which you can gig. Here in general, only metropolises have places and scenes. I think the tour will be very exciting and interesting. We don't hope to make money with it or similar shit. All we want is to play, to meet people, to live.

In your country the Catholic church is very powerful, how does it reflect in everyday life? And how does it reflect in the hardcore/punk scene? Are there any religious hardcore/punk bands in Brazil?

Wilton: Well, we were colonized by the Portuguese, and they came with their Catholic shit! But today there are also many Protestant people. The Catholic church had lost force in recent times. But the Catholic church still has much influence. The Protestant church is more powerful especially because they have a lot of propaganda in the media. But the Catholic church is very rich in Brazil. They're really rich! The Catholic church doesn't have any influence in the punk/HC scene. Except for the fact that we hate them. There are many religious bands here but more in the metal style. I don't know about any "punk bands" involved with religion. Also, in general, religious bands are involved with the Protestant church and not Catholic.

What kind of jobs do you work? Is there any unemployment support or minimum wage/workers protection in Brazil?

Wilton: I don't have a job at the moment. At my last job I was working with hot stamps on book covers. Here, you don't have unemployment support every time. Whether you work for one year or ten years in a job, you will receive unemployment support for five or six months if you lose your job. After that, you're fucked! Workers don't have many rights here. The minimum wage for one month of work is something like 100 dollars, and 30% of the Brazilian population survives with 50% of that. I was trying to work in are of photography, but it's hard to find a job in that area here. But I hope to work in this area some day because I love it.

There are people who say that DIY is just a neccessity for bands who are not good or not popular enough to get picked by a major label, and they also say that if those bands had the opportunity to go commercial, they would say OK. What about Desastre? Would you like to live off your music? If Boka, the singer of Ratos De Porão—who is on MTV Brazil—approached you to have your video on MTV, would you be interested?

Wilton: Haha! I'm not interested in MTV. The MTV speaker is João Gordo—Boka is the drummer. Gordo also had a program on the radio and he played many punk bands, especially from Europe. Anyway, last year we played in a big Festival here called Goiânia Noise. Ratos De Porão also played the same day. So, during this festival came many people from rock magazines and MTV. And in the MTV review, they said that our show was shit!!! We can't have a video on MTV. I don't know about Europe, but here MTV is a big shit channel for rich people. But I don't think that you will change if you have a video on MTV, since you're like you are. For you to live off of your music here in Brazil, you need to speak about shit and have stupid feelings. I'm not interested.

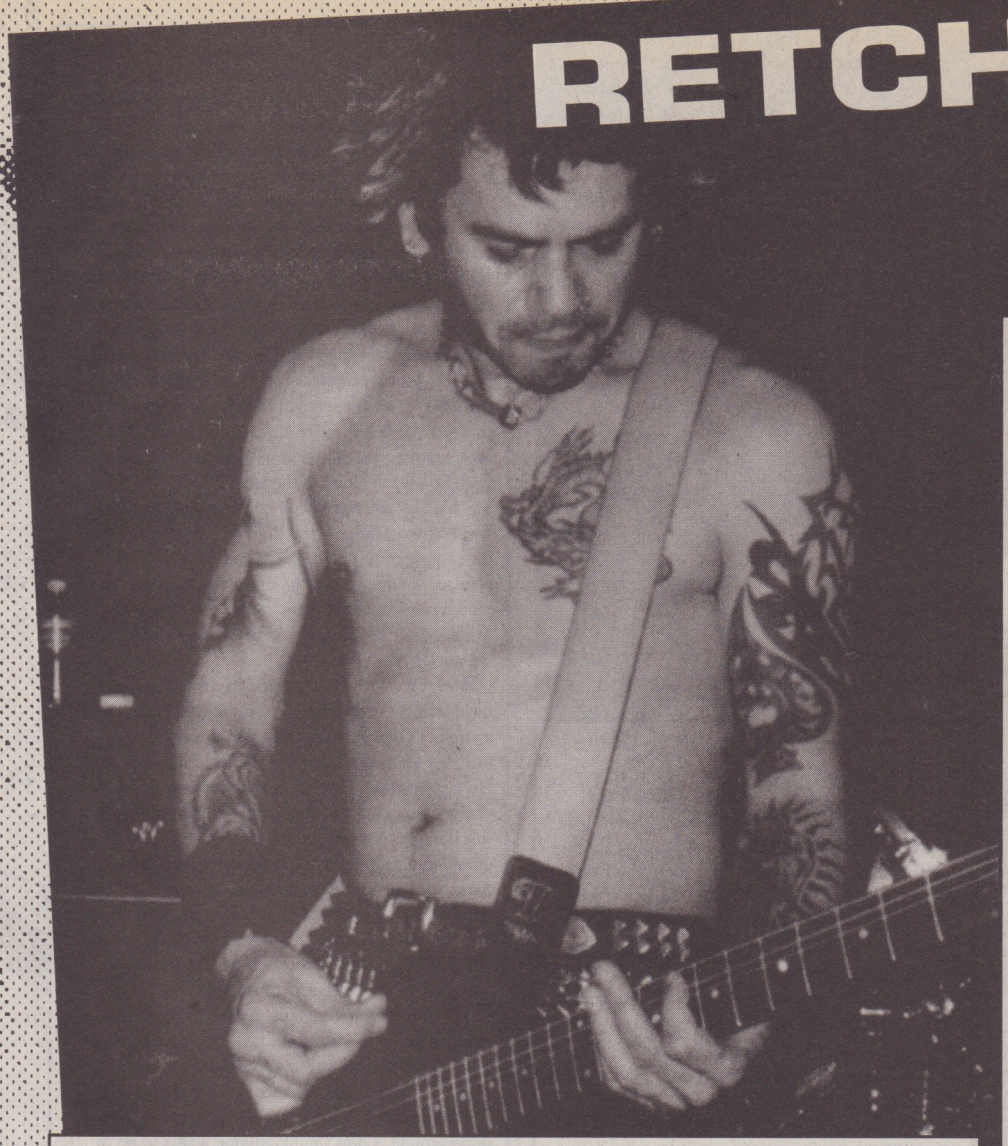
What do you try to say in your lyrics? Do you think that political lyrics are important in punk? Are you active in any protests, organizations, etc.?

Wilton: I write about my feelings. I try to say what I think—nothing more. I'm not interested in changing people because people aren't interested in change. I don't think that political lyrics are so important. The important thing is that you feel good. Sometimes I write about politics, but I don't think that needs to be a rule. I was involved in protests many years ago, but today I don't have the patience for it. People are stupid and they like it! They aren't interested if they are fucked or if they have rights—they like being exploited. Fuck off!!!

OK, that's all from me. Anything to add? Your favorite Discharge song, the kind of soap Desastre members use to make their mohawks, etc.?

Wilton: Thanks for the good questions. My favorite Discharge song at the moment is "Hear Nothing See Nothing," but it will change fast. I love it all! The soap is the cheapest kind. If you have interest in listening to our noise, we have a tape available on Phobia Records and an LP on Undislessed Records. Also we have a CD Pesadelo Real ($5 USD ppd). If you want, write to us—do it! Contact: Wilton D, Cx. Postal 445, Gyn-GO, CEP - 74001-970, Brazil. email: desastrehc@hotmail.com

RETCHING RED



One fine day, several months ago, I collected my mail, and there to my surprise was a CD from a band I had never heard of: Retching Red. Upon further investigation I discovered that this was a new band, a kind of punk rock underdog super group, fronted by one of my favorite women in punk rock, Cinder Block. I popped in the CD. I was pleasantly surprised to hear pure rage and old-school style hardcore. I could not wait to find out how Joe, Mike, Crash, and Cinder wound up in a band together, and what their plans were.

Interview by Renae Bryant

How did Retching Red come together?

Cinder: We just emerged from the smoldering Oakland underground punk scene. Cyco Loco (Mike) and I met at the infamous Slaughterhouse, a punk rock speakeasy which has since been demolished. Our first show was August 29th 2004.

Mike: Cinder and I wanted to start a new project, I really wanted to get back to playing bass Originally we were looking for all sober musicians, but sometimes if you want someone good, then you can't be too picky. We went through a few guitar players, they were great, but they didn't quite cut it. I've known everyone that's in the band for years and we all click well and they are experienced musicians.

Crash: Mike and I were in a band for a short while, Hot Plate. After we broke up I ran into both Cinder and Mike at an RKL show and they asked me if I was interested in starting a new project. I really didn't think they were serious at the time as it was prior to their sobriety. And boy were they fucking hammered that night. I gave them a kind of a "sure whenever you are ready" comment. Three months later it actually formed and the rest is history.

Joe: I've known Mike for a while. I always thought he was a little bit crazy (come to find out it's true). He sent out an email asking if anyone knew of a guitar player who would be able to learn a shitload of songs for some shows they were playing. I emailed him back saying I would be up for it, and they just sorta kept me around. I think for the comic relief factor.

For all those who are ignorant out there…what bands were each of you in prior to this one?

Cinder: I've been in so many damn bands, most of which didn't record more than a demo or tour. The most significant one was Tilt. We were on Lookout! then Fat Wreck Chords and we put out five full-length records and toured extensively.

Mike: I'm also the singer for Oppressed Logic for the past 11 years. I formerly played bass for Last Round Up, Angry Samoans in 1996, Strung Up, Hot Plate and a few others.

Crash: I'm in Trouble Maker now and have been for about a year now. I was also in Hot Plate, The Eddie Haskells and some minor projects over the past 15 years.

Joe: Currently I'm the bass player for Strychnine and have also played with Naked Aggression, Los Bombers, I Madman, Custard Pie, Iron Vegan, etc., etc.

Is there any significance to the name, Retching Red?

Mike: Puking blood!

Cinder: I like the image it conjures up. Those who are retching red are none too healthy.

Crash: Pictures are worth a thousand words.

Joe: When I first heard the name I thought it had something to do with a visit from Aunt Flo.

These are perhaps the angriest Cinder Block lyrics I've read. Any response?

Mike: I think that's what happens when you start hanging out with me!! Still it's not my fault! After our set with the band Cranked Up, Pat the singer came up to me and said "Damn, what did you do to Cinder??" Ha! She was already pissed off and hated pop punk, so don't blame me!

Cinder: Like I really needed any outside motivation! It's all been building up in me for as long as I can remember. I always tried to push Tilt into a more aggressive sounding direction but the pop sensibility of the other members thwarted my efforts. I kind of succeeded with Collect 'Em All. We set out to make a basic, hard and driving record in a short amount of time. But Retching Red really hits the spot for me, it's the kind of music I've always wanted to do. No holds barred hardcore! As far as the lyrics go, they really come from the gut. I'm not worrying about being poetic. I'm just trying to get to the core of the shit I'm feeling without over-thinking it. Most of it is very pissed off, I can't help it. I'm not out to posture, it's just what's going on inside me. I'm not trying to say what I think people want to hear or to write in a style that's expected of me. I still have that dark humor though. Some songs are very satirical. I have fun with using the image of a dominatrix to personify speed addiction for example. I've had my brush with amphetamines and I've seen what it does to people. So in the song "Plentiful" I am taking the role of the addiction, personifying it, speaking to my prey. I've gotten great reactions to the content of the songs. But it's not the kind of thing people seem to want to chat about at shows, I wish they would, so it's hard to know the real reaction. Sometimes the irony I use in my songs gets misinterpreted or taken literally. That's always pretty funny. No folks, I have never and will never rip a rooster's head off. So vegans, get off my ass!

Joe: I think she's hella pissed off.

How are fans of Oppressed Logic and Tilt responding to Retching Red?

Mike: I think it's been good. A lot of Oppressed Logic fans seem to really like Retching Red and to me Retching Red is a lot like Oppressed Logic, but with angry female vocals. I get a lot of posi-

tive reactions from people who like both bands.
Cinder: I was expecting fans of hardcore to dislike us because I used to be in Tilt and Tilt fans to hate us because I'm not singing melodically anymore. But it's quite the opposite. Both camps seem to dig us.
Joe: I try not to associate with fans of Oppressed Logic or Tilt.
Why do you think it's important to keep playing…why is punk still relevant to you all (since so many seem to "graduate" from the scene at 21)?
Mike: It's just something I've liked doing my entire life, I got my first bass at the age of 10 and been into music my entire life. I'm 36 now and without playing music and punk rock I would just fizzle away. I don't want to be one of those fuckers who pack it up and conform. This is what I do and who I am. I am a lifer and I don't like to be told "not to do something" and if someone is a hater and disagrees with my views, they can fuck off!
Cinder: We're all lifers. I never grew out of my "punk phase" like most people my age have. Oh well. I love punk rock. I'll keep on doing what I love. I don't want to sit back in my armchair watching a Ramones documentary and get all teary eyed for my long lost rock 'n' roll youth. Not when I can feel it coursing through my veins and out through my lungs when I'm up there singing. The powers that be want you to fade into passive obscurity and just turn into an obedient consumer. I choose to keep using my voice to show my objection to the bullshit world that the fat fucking politicians want us to just accept quietly.
Joe: If you "used to be punk" then you never were.
Why should the West Bay fuck off?
Joe: Why shouldn't they? Everyone need's to fuck off!!
Mike: Funny you should ask that, since this band tends to play in San Francisco (West Bay) quite often. I think that song is mostly about the snobby, know-it-all, better-than-thou hipsters that have their fucking nose's in the air, kind of like the PC Full Of Shit!!
Cinder: It's a fucking joke! Most people get it. How absurd is it to hate an adjacent piece of real estate? I just think it's funny. Just flipping shit to my friends for never making it over to the East Bay to hang out. People in S.F. don't like it when you call it "Frisco." They call us the "East Bay" so I thought it would be funny to call them "West Bay" in retaliation. But it's a friendly jab. It's not like we have this diehard East Bay allegiance. But then again Oakland does rule so bring it on you pansy-ass 'Friscans, we'll kick your ass!
Why the Agression and Gits covers?
Joe: Because they both rule, duh.
Mike: We got asked to be on an Agression tribute comp, "Insomnia" was a song that wasn't taken and we were really happy with our version that we recorded, so we decided to put it on our CD as well. Who knows when the comp will ever come out, but it will be on a really cool tribute comp with some great old punk bands sometime this year hopefully.
Cinder: The Gits were so inspiring to me in the early 90s. I was about to quit singing because I just thought the scene sucked, especially for women. A friend turned me on to The Gits and I was bowled over. Mia Zapata was a force of nature. Watching her sing I could just see the music coming up through the soles of her feet and then out through her mouth came this amazing torrent. I remembered why I started singing in the first place. When she was brutally murdered we lost one of the greatest female rock singers ever. So doing Spear and Magic Helmet was a natural choice. Joe Spleen, The Gits guitar player, told me that the song itself was meant to be a generic hardcore song, but of course Mia got hold of it and turned it into an amazing and prophetic anthem. It is a true story about a friend of hers that gets attacked and left in an alleyway. Sadly, this is what happened to Mia. When we play it I always send it out to her. There's a new movie about The Gits by Jessica Bender. Check it out if you get a chance.

Do you have any more connection to Cinder Block Printing, the business that you help found?
Cinder: As of right now I'm still half owner, but that will change in the near future. I'm really very proud of what Jeffery and I created together out of nothing. Both the band and the business were labors of love. People assume we were some kind of trust fund brats or something, but nothing could've been further from the truth. Jeffery was one of 12 kids and his family was poor. I came from a middle class background but never got any money from my family since my Mom died of cancer and my Dad was hit with huge medical bills. We built Cinder Block and Tilt with no capital other than "sweat equity" and $600 or so we scraped together. We've taken separate roads but we're still family. Jeffery has been helming the ship and will continue to do so. I wish him all the luck in the world.
Since all of you have been in the punk scene for a while now…what do you think is the potential for the organization for the scene to create true lasting positive change in society, or do you disagree that punk even can take on this role?
Mike: I have no idea, especially with the kind of shit we play, I don't think so.
Cinder: I think the punk scene itself will probably never really "organize" since punk is intrinsically anarchic. Organization means rules and power structure and all the shit that punks hate. Punk music will always have an effect on society as long as it exposes the crappy state of things. Some people say that's just complaining without action but you need the complaining. It helps reach the youth who recognize these feelings in themselves and don't feel so alone anymore. This in turn will provide hope and motivation for their own individual political lives. I think it takes individual grass roots efforts for change to really soak into the fabric of society.
Crash: I don't think punkers will ever get to the point of being that organized. But there is an underground scene. That is our contribution to society. There is a place for people to go to that is distant from the societal norms. We like the scene to be underground. I don't think anyone wants to be in spotlight so to speak. As long as there is an underground scene, it is our way of telling society to fuck off. I give a lot of credit for the people that go through the hassle to put on shows. I am fortunate to be associated with the underground music scene.
Joe: Punk has a lot of different meanings to different people. It's just what you make of it ya' know? My definition of "punk" is probably totally different then yours. Or maybe it's the same, that's the beauty of it.
Many kids want to get involved in making some kind of difference, but don't know where to start. What are some non-profit organizations that you support or are a part of?
Mike: I DJ on Pirate Cat Radio 87.9 in SF Tuesday nights 10pm-12am, people can listen live online as well at www.piratecatradio.com, I'm hoping to start my own Internet radio station sometime soon. I also book a lot of DIY punk shows and help out some touring bands when I can.
Cinder: Food Not Bombs has been diligently providing food to the homeless for years. I think we desperately need nationwide needle exchanges. I contribute a lot of money every year to Christmas in April, an organization that fixes up low income housing here in Oakland. But it's really hard to know just who to give money to. For instance I'm pro-choice but I'm not convinced that money I give

to NARAL will really get into the hands that can help the cause. I'd rather write a song about the realities of young women who die from botched homemade abortions because they were subject to the new "parental consent" laws that are spreading all over the country. I wish people would pay attention to local elections and vote against shit like that.

Joe: Food Not Bombs, the IWW, ARA, any place where you think you can make a difference, even if it's just recycling you're doing something.

How do you feel about being role models in the punk scene? [Whether we like it or not the youngsters look up to us.]

Mike: I think it's cool when I hear that from kids and people that respect what I do. I've been in this scene for over 20 years now, playing and booking shows, and if that inspires someone to do the same, then I think that's rad. I don't really see myself as a role model, but when I have fans singing along with me, asking for advice or even my autograph (ha!), I think that's awesome. So if I am a role model to some kid, then killer!

Cinder: I agree with Mike. I hate to think of myself as separate from the audience. I am part of the audience. But kids do look up to you. I dig it when someone says they were inspired to start singing or to start a band.

Crash: I do not feel like a role model, just trying to keep the scene alive with good music for people to check out. Get people out of the house.

Joe: Be yourself. You definitely don't want us as anyone's role models.

Mike: Yeah, especially not you mother fucker! HA!

Cinder, is your MS in remission? Do you mind talking about it?

Cinder: I don't mind talking about it but I get sick thinking about it. Talking about it may help someone else. It's always there, ever-present sensations of tingling and numbness. It's really not that bad. In this last year however, I came down with a condition probably triggered by the MS that has caused terrible chronic pain. I've been through the ringer but the pain is finally getting under control. I am so pissed at the health care system. Both Kaiser and Blue Cross washed their hands of me. When I went to find better treatment at Stanford University and in San Francisco neither company would cover those costs. I'm double insured for fuck's sake!!! And they still don't cover shit!

How did the tour go with MDC?

Mike: All the shows went great. We played ten shows with MDC throughout California, five up north and five down south. Those guys were really cool and took care of us killer. We ended in San Diego with Cinder breaking her teeth on the last song.

Cinder: I fucking love MDC. They rule. I will always hold those ten days in high regard. When the new Nazi Pope was chosen I was dying to hear what Dave was saying onstage. He was probably having a field day what with a former Hitler Youth pope named Joseph Ratzinger! That name you couldn't make up.

Crash: For me it was fucking amazing… I'm one of MDC's biggest fans and to go on tour with them was a dream come true. MDC rocks; if you get a chance, check them out.

Joe: It fuckin' ruled.

What kind of reaction have you gotten to your logo? (A graphic depiction of a woman with a demonhead crotch and blood belching forth spelling "Retching Red")

Cinder: Awesome! People love it, We've only had a couple of complaints. There's one "punk" magazine that won't run our ad because they disapprove of our logo.

Who thought of it?

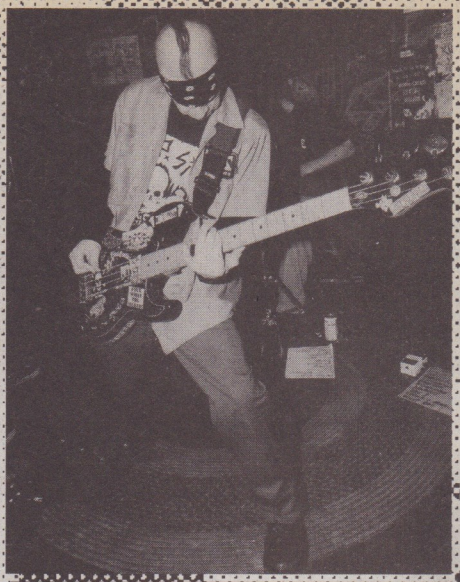
Cinder: I came up with the concept and described it to an artist on the Cinder Block staff, Damon Wallace. He did a great job interpreting my idea.

Mike: Now that we're on the subject there's something I'd like to clear up. Recently I've run into a couple of people have suggested that our artwork is similar to Butt Trumpet's. Let there be no mistake our artwork came long before theirs.

Cinder: Butt Trumpet's singer Thom Bone co-produced our record, saw the logo, loved it and insisted on having the same girl and the same artist for his t-shirts. At the time I thought it was a funny idea but now I regret letting it happen. People are getting confused and think we ripped off their art when nothing could be further from the truth. Thom will tell you just that if you ask him.

What are the future plans for Retching Red?

Mike: Well we will be on a US tour starting July 1st in Portland, and will be hitting places in Washington, Minneapolis, Detroit, Canada, New York, Texas and others. We also are writing new songs for a second full length CD, as well as playing a lot of shows and touring a lot.



Joe: To piss off rednecks.

Any words of wisdom you'd like to pass on to all of us in the scene?

Mike: DIY!! Book your own shows, fuck pay-to-play clubs and bullshit promoters and put out your own records! Keep it real and do what you want to do, just be true! Come see us live and pick up our CD Get Your Red Wings!

Cinder: Keep carrying the torch! Come out to the shows and scream with me. I promise not to hurt you when I drag you into the pit (if you're good). Please check out our site, it's the first one I ever built. Leave a comment on our "Talk Shit" guestbook. Also ask your record store why the hell they don't have Retching Red CDs. We are our own distributor so it's kinda hard to get stores to order our stuff.

Crash: Support, support, support. Keep the scene alive. What else you got to do anyway, watch non-reality TV?

Joe: Avoid the clap!

Contact information…

Retching Red, 4096 Piedmont Ave. #216, Oakland, CA. 94611-5221. or email us at info@retchingred.com, also check out our website at www.retchingred.com

weaving the deathbag

Weaving the Deathbag is a three-piece, metal-tinged hardcore band from Wisconsin that has been on the scene since around October of 2001. Comprised of members of past Wisconsin bands Asinine Solution, United Super Villains, and Defacto Oppression, Weaving the Deathbag plays high speed, guitar-hook laden music in the same vein as those bands, but with a style and intensity all their own. The following interview was conducted by Nathan Berg after a weekend-long practice session in Madison, Wisconsin in the spring of 2005.

MRR: You guys all live three hours apart from each other.
Mike: Try five, buddy!

MRR: So, what are the trials and tribulations of that–being in a band where everyone lives hours away from each other and everybody works full-time jobs?
Nick: Where do you start? From the financial end, it costs $30 just to drive here and back...
Mike: Sixty bucks for me!
Nick: ...and then we practice maybe once a month. We were talking about this earlier today, it feels like we're always playing catch-up.
Mike: Yeah, we definitely suffer musically, I think. We practice, get a song, learn it and improve it as much as we can, but the reality of it is that we don't have as much time to do everything as we would like.

MRR: So how often do you play out locally?
Mike: Seems like we play in spurts. We might play two or three shows a month, and then not play for a few months. Like now, we haven't had a show in like...
MikeO: A really long time.

MRR: So, you almost get together to play shows as often as you practice?
Mike and Nick: Yeah, pretty much.
MikeO: I think one of the other things with the distance factor is how it affects our time together as friends. For the most part the only time we get together is to practice, so the weekend is spent in the studio and we don't get much time to just hang out.
Mike: Well, yeah, it kills your weekend. If we have two weekends scheduled, and you're working a full-time job, your time off from work is almost like work.
Nick: Yesterday was my first day off in twelve days. I worked twelve days straight. These are the only two days off I'll have for the next week and a half, and they're spent down here, practicing, which isn't a bad thing, but at

the same time it doesn't leave much time to take care of things around home that need to be done, or time to just relax.

MRR: So, with all those negative factors–like the money to drive here and taking the time out of your schedule– what is it that makes it all worth it?

Mike: To fucking *slay*!!! (*laughter*) I don't know...fun?

Nick: I think it's worth it because I get to play in a band with two people who are my friends. We've known each other for quite a long time. All of our old bands used to play shows together all of the time. Where I live in La Crosse, no one wants to play fast hardcore. So, it's worth the drive. I like to come down here just to hang out with these guys and playing is just the bonus.

MikeO: To me, definitely the biggest thing is the fun aspect of it all–just getting together with friends and playing. Being involved in this music scene is the other reason. When I go to a show I'm often thinking how I wish I were playing. I wouldn't say it's a competitive thing, I just like the feeling of participating.

Mike: I agree. When I've been in between bands and been at a show, as much fun as I'm having, I get mad because I'm not playing. It feels like, "I want to do that, too!" but I can't find somebody to play with that wants to play what I want to play. Plus, another cool thing about this band is that we all really like playing the kind of music that we do. It's not a competitive thing, but I like to be good. And I think that we're a good band as far as hardcore goes. I think we bring a little more musicianship to it than a lot of bands. I'm not ragging on anyone or think that we're anywhere near the top of the musicianship scale, but I think we make a point to be good and not generic, even though a lot of people put us in a genre category.

MRR: So, kind of on the topic of all of you living far apart, all of you are from small, western Wisconsin towns. You guys all grew up in small-town punk rock scenes. What's cool about those scenes and what sucks about them? If you're on tour, what's the difference between playing big cities and small towns?

Mike: Well, on tour, or even playing around Wisconsin and Minnesota, I think small-town shows are the best. Most of the time, the people there are more appreciative of the fact that there's a show, so more kids will come out. They may not necessarily be the most punk kids, but they'll all be excited that there's a show and something to do. Big cities are way different. I think these guys would agree with me that the worst show we ever played was in San Francisco, which is thought of as the hardcore capital or something, but it's so hard to draw people if you're not really popular already.

MRR: Yeah, well they've got ten other shows that they can go to on any given night.

Mike: Yeah, there were four people at that show.

Nick: A prime example would be that show in San Francisco versus a show we played in Mandan, which is next to Bismark in North Dakota. There were three hundred kids at that show and it was in the middle of fuckin' nowhere. San Francisco, which you read about in *MRR* or other zines as being the place to be—the famous Bay Area Punk Scene, you know?—but four people show up to the show.

MikeO: On the lines of Mandan, beside how many people come out, in a smaller town, you're really offering something different for people to do. A town like Mandan has very structured activities for kids to do, so doing a punk show makes a true difference because it's a really different activity for kids. They can be the way they want to be without being supervised. Bigger cities have all kinds of things to do, so I think it's more important to these smaller towns because kids will say, "Wow, I really had a good time at that show." They get to hang out with kids who have similar ideas or, again, just do something for a night that's different than the regular redneck, podunk, small town bullshit of their everyday lives.

If you took one of our songs at our speed but made it 5 minutes long, there would be 40 different parts and it would just seem like a rock opera. It wouldn't be very fun.

MRR: You're administering a small dose of chaos into their normal, boring routine.

MikeO: It's a true alternative. Like what did everyone do in Chippewa [*hometown for both Mikes*]? Go to field parties, drink in the parking lot of McDonald's after the football game–other than that, there's nothing.

Nick: That was a crazy thing too, when I first started playing with United Super Villains. I have an aunt, uncle and grandma that lived in Menomonie, so I would go up there all the time growing up and see how boring it seemed. Then Karl said, "Hey, we've got a show in Menomonie this weekend." I was like, "Fuckin' Menomonie, what?!?" And then we show up to Olson's house and play this show, and it was fucking crazy. I was blown away by how cool it was.

MRR: When you go out on tour, is it harder to book those kinds of shows in the small town scenes? Do you make a conscience effort to do that?

MikeO: Well, you need to know about them, and that's the hard part.

Mike: Yeah, if you get 'em, it's great, but we're not always so sure how to go out and find them.

MikeO: I've been trying to work on getting a list of people around Wisconsin doing shows in small towns. I could forward that to out-of-state bands and they could hit up these small towns.

Mike: Another thing about small town scenes, they fluctuate. They can be really hot for two to three years and then there's nothing for three or four.

MRR: You guys have four 7"s out. Why all 7"s? Is there something in particular that you like about that format?

Mike: Felix [Havoc] says it's the best and we do what he says. (*Laughter*) No, but I do agree with what he wrote in a column once when he said "Would you want to listen to a full-length by Code 13?" Would you want to listen to a full length by Weaving The Deathbag? I think it would just be overkill. When you can crunch ten minutes of madness into a 7", that's a little bit more effective given our style of music.

RR: I was just thinking about that. If you guys put out a full-length album, it would have to have 36 songs on it or something.

Mike: Yeah, and it'd take us five years to write it!

Nick: It just seems like that would be too much.

MikeO: Bands that do LPs generally have longer songs. If you take one of our 7"s and compare it to a band with a full-length, there's probably just as many different parts, our songs are just more condensed. Although, don't get us wrong by thinking that this is the way we think all music should be like, we just found what works for us in this band.

MRR: So is that the idea behind playing songs as short as they are too?

Mike: If you took one of our songs at our speed but made it 5 minutes long, there would be 40 different parts and it would just seem like a rock opera. It wouldn't be very fun.

MRR: Plus Nick's arms would fly off...

Nick: Yeah, we've got this new song that we're just starting to learn, it's like almost two minutes long! I mean, it's fucking ridiculous. It's like two songs in one!

Mike: It is funny though how many people ask, "When are you doing an LP?" It's like...probably never.

MRR: Getting into some of the lyrical stuff. You play hardcore, so naturally a lot of your lyrics are about being pissed off, whether it's at the powers that be or something else. You're pissed off about one thing or another. At the same time, in many of your songs and the liner notes to your records is an element of hope, something that makes it seem like things are going to be alright. What part do those two emotions—anger and hope—play into your songs, or into punk rock in general?

Mike: It's all a front dude. We're just trying to sell records. (*Laughter*)

MRR: Apparently, I'm reading way too deep into this.

MikeO: When you write a depressing song about how the apocalypse is upon us or whatever, or when a song is just obviously not a happy topic, you're really embracing that these kinds of things are out there. It's encouraging to me to embrace that "dire straits" type of attitude. If you don't

want to see that pile of poop in front of you, then you just might step in it. The lyrics of "I'm Getting Out" make me think about the situations in life that I want to escape, and it is a depressing thing to think about due to all the challenges there are. You can't improve or fix something unless you first realize there is a problem. Hardcore lyrics can be pretty depressing, although the important part is how people identify and read into them.

Mike: I hear you. You can't pay attention to the things going on in life right now and not have a reaction that angers you. If you're the sort of person that recognizes that some things that happen are good for some people and very bad for others, it just fuels the fire. There's nothing unique about that. But at the same time, a lot of bands focus on these negatives. They don't seem to realize that there are alternatives. I mean, all these situations where people are being fucked over for whatever reason—whether it's economically, or by the war, or health care—all such problems are based on the idea of somebody winning and somebody losing. To me, it wouldn't be too tough to figure out solutions that work for everybody; we're just too entrenched in current ways.

All these situations where people are being fucked over for whatever reason—whether it's economically, or by the war, or health care—all such problems are based on the idea of somebody winning and somebody losing.

MRR: Not just coming up with what they are, but convincing people that they should try them.

Mike: Right. It just gets to be so black and white—any issue. When you hear people talking from within the system, or on talk radio, all of their problems are black and white and all of their solutions are black and white. It's so frustrating sometimes because you don't know if you should just pick an issue and make it your life's goal to try to fix it or not. So, I just write songs about it.

MRR: Within the liner notes on your newest 7", you talk about the importance of simply rocking out and having a good time. Is that part of that hope, that even though things can look bleak and desperate, if you get together and have a show where you sing about it, you can still have fun doing it?

Mike: I totally agree with that. It's so fun to do. It's a release, to not take yourself so seriously all the time. Sometimes, you listen to the records of ultra-political bands and you can't tell if these people have a sense of humor in their real life.

Nick: When you see bands play, and they're like, "This song is about *war*," or "This song is about suicide," you think, why? Because war rules and suicide is great? They don't talk about it. They sing about it, but there's no real discussion or solutions talked about.

MikeO: But at the same time, some bands that play brutal music are matching the tone of the lyrics and stage presence with the music. During their set, the purpose isn't to offer solutions or hope, it is to bring you into mood of the music. But if you know any of those people outside of that setting, you might find they're just like you and not all gloom and doom.

Mike: I guess for our band and the way we do our songs, I prefer to stay more grounded in reality, not theatrics. It works for us. I like to reflect on people I work with or people I know, or explaining experiences that I've had. I've never been in a war. I know that I'm fully opposed to it, but I'm not going to pretend like I know the realities of it either. I don't have that first-hand experience. A lot of politically extreme bands probably turn off people closer to the mainstream because their message is "Anarchy or nothing," which I might totally agree with, but that's not going to get masses of people to turn on the light bulb and say, "Yeah, good idea." You have to be able to relate to people where they're at.

MRR: (sarcastically) "Now that we've heard this punk rock song, society is finally able to move forward."

MikeO: A lot of people that come out to see us are excited because we're not all about an image—although I am pretty styling. There's no attitude that we are something special. There are probably bass players in the audience at any given show that could smoke me, but that isn't what it is all about. We're just up there to play, fuck up, have fun, whatever—and that's something a lot people can identify with. A lot of people seem to really dig that about us.

MRR: One of the songs you play that I've found most intriguing is called "Watching My Friends and Family Die." I've heard you talk about it live and I've obviously read the lyrics, but I was hoping you could give me a more comprehensive idea about the meaning and thoughts behind that one.

Mike: Boy, you had to pick that one, huh? It's one of the hardest to explain...

MikeO: Well, we can start by stating that it isn't about watching somebody chop up our friends and family with an axe. It would probably be more aptly titled as "Watching My Friends' and Family's Ideals Die."

Mike: Well, yeah. I'm getting older now and I have been involved with punk rock for a long time. You see within the punk scene that people fall out, but then you start noticing your family and other friends that you used to be close with: some get domesticated or lose interest in certain things, which is fine. I've lost interest in many things over the years too. But it seems like they've lost interest in doing anything. It just kind of turns into work, mortgage payment, TV. (*in a sarcastic voice*:) "What? You're going to a show! I stopped doing that six years ago!" It's like, "That's fine, but you're not really doing anything else either."

Nick: It's not necessarily just a commentary on the punk scene. Even outside of that, watching people fall into a routine of going to work, coming home and watching TV. Getting up, going to work, coming home and watching TV. They're never embracing new things. If you stop going to shows, I don't have a problem with that. If you don't enjoy it anymore, then don't go. But then you shouldn't go from being a productive, active person into being, you know, nothing.

Mike: The other theme in the song is the ridicule you get from friends or family who just think you're retarded for carrying on. (*sarcastically*:) "Still playing guitar, huh?" or "Still playing in a band, huh?" It's like, "Sorry, I'm not a golfer. I guess I'm just not as important as you guys. I'm still playing punk rock music."

MRR: They think you're just not letting go of some juvenile thing?

Mike: Yeah, they think you're a kid still. It's just ridiculous. I can't figure it out. Especially when all my co-workers talk about is mowing their lawn or something. Or, "Did you watch the Vikings game?" Yeah, I did. But you know what? I'm not going to talk about it every day this week. I watched the game and it was fun and now it's done.

MRR: I was wondering, with these people who look down on you because you're older but still play in a band and act youthful, is it envy?

Mike: I think it is, at least partially. The people I work with, some of them thought that our going on tour was the coolest thing they'd ever heard of. They're thinking, "Wow, I had a baby when I was eighteen," and that's all they've been doing since.

Nick: But again, if that's truly what they want to do, then I don't have a problem with that. If someone gets pregnant and it was an accident, but they embrace that as what they want to do, that's fine. Here's an example. I just bought a house and Olson here used to be totally anti-buying a house...

MRR: He's been anti-everything at one point or another. (*Laughter*)

Nick: But there's a balance involved. OK, I'm buying a house and there's a lot that goes along with that. I'm responsible for its upkeep and sometimes that might be quite time consuming.

MRR: Yeah, and the word "equity" becomes a regular part of your vocabulary.

Nick: And I'm OK with that and I like that idea. I understand renting, because then I don't have to worry about anything. If the furnace breaks, fuck it; I call the landlord and he takes care of it. So, there's a trade-off. Some people will get down on others: "You're going to be domesticated. You're buying a house and getting married." But if that's your choice and that's what you want to do, I think it's great. As long as you continually do things because that's what you want to do, not just because that's the way things are supposed

to be done. You have to buy a house. You have to get married. You have to have a job. You have to have 2.5 kids. If you want to do those things, genuinely, then that's great. But some people have a kid at 18, and they're depressed because their life isn't as fulfilled as they would like it to be.
Mike: I totally agree with that. Back to my co-workers, I can't believe the things they say about their husbands or wives. I think, "You're married to this person, you shouldn't be talking about them like that." It almost like they're pissed that they're married and have kids, while still upholding those values. My girlfriend has had co-workers confide in her that they feel trapped in their marriage, but they stick with it because they have kids. It's a daily dirge, you know.

MRR: I hear that.
Nick: So, it's not necessarily that you don't want to get married and have kids, it's just that you don't want to find yourself, fifteen years from now, trapped in a situation that you never wanted to be in.
Mike: Yeah, so that's the tip of the iceberg about the meaning of that song.
MRR: That's a pretty big iceberg.

MRR: So, I've always wanted to ask about the origins of the name "Weaving The Deathbag." I'm sure you've answered this one plenty of times.
Mike: We stole it from a Stephen King novel. Well, we didn't really steal it, but I was reading a book by him—it's a pretty complicated story to describe. Part of the story is that the characters can see this stuff going on around them that we can't see, but if you went to this next plane of existence you could see the things that are truly at play in the world. There's a force that controls life and death, and the character describes being able to see a "deathbag" around certain individuals or buildings, etc. that are on the brink of death or of being destroyed. In this one passage, he talks about seeing a deathbag being woven around something and I thought, "Weaving The Deathbag....hmmmmm." I was reading that book when we first got together and we were trying to think of band names so I just wrote it down.
Nick: It ended up being a bad choice because we can't fit it on any of the merch. (Laughter)
Mike: Long band names are bullshit when you're trying to sell stuff!
Nick: Seriously, stickers and buttons...that's what a band is all about.

MRR: Well, perhaps you should re-brand yourself as your acronym and go as WTD.
Mike: You know, that's not a bad idea...
MikeO: That's what it should be. I always see WTDB, but deathbag is only one word.
Mike: Wow, a three-letter acronym. It's not a bad idea.
MikeO: Yeah man. It sounds so professional.

MRR: Plus, it bears a strong resemblance to the acronym for Weapons of Mass Destruction.
MikeO: But our name did end up working pretty well though, especially in relation to the songs we were just talking about. They're about having a deathbag woven around you–how the weight of reality can destroy you. So the meaning of the band name actually does fit with the meaning of our songs.
Mike: Plus, the idea of weaving and things being intertwined, that's a key part of it. I was saying before, issues are never black and white, never isolated. Everything's related. It's so lame to hear someone say, "Let's raise the minimum wage, then that will help with drug prices and health care...and this and this and this." It might help a little, but mostly it's just little smidgets of nothing. It's like a Cracker Jack box. Sure, you get a little prize, but it's really just bullshit.

Contact through:
www.weavingthedeathbag.com
-or-
Hungry Ghosts Records
PO Box 620241
Middleton, WI 53562

GATHER

GATHER PLAYS A BRAND OF SINCERE HARDCORE THAT I HAVEN'T SEEN IN ALMOST A DECADE. THEIR RADICAL POLITICS, VEGAN STRAIGHTEDGE LIFESTYLE, AND FORWARD AND OPEN SUPPORT OF DIRECT ACTION FOR TOTAL LIBERATION, LAID OVER SOME GREAT MID-1990S STYLE CRUNCHY METALLIC HARDCORE, SEND TINGLES DOWN MY SPINE EVERY TIME I HEAR THEM. I WAS ABLE TO SPEAK WITH THEM BRIEFLY ON MARCH 27TH AT ONE IN THE MORNING ON THE STAGE OF THE 924 GILMAN ST. PROJECT AFTER THEY PLAYED WITH TAKARU (RIP), RESIST AND EXIST, RESISTANT CULTURE, AND KILL DASH NINE AT A BENEFIT SHOW FOR ANARCHY: A JOURNAL OF DESIRE ARMED. GATHER IS: ALLAN (GUITAR), EVA (VOCALS), DUSTIN (PERCUSSION), AND RANDY (BASS)

MRR: CAN YOU TELL ME WHY AND HOW YOU CHOSE THE NAME GATHER?

Dustin: We decided to form as a band right after Total Liberation Fest in January of 2004. Kevin Tucker from the Green Anarchy Collective was there, and it was the first time we had heard about hunting animals and eating roadkill in a radical context. We were starting to learn about anti-civilization theory, and we were hearing anti-civilization folks talking about eating meat and being hunter-gatherers. So, part of it was emphasizing the "gather" aspect of the hunter-gatherer lifestyle.

Eva: Not only emphasizing the gatherer part, but eliminating the hunter part.

Allan: There is also another aspect to the name Gather. The double meaning is that we are hoping to gather the punk and hardcore scenes to really bring about a positive change in our punk rock community.

Dustin: We also wanted a one-word name as a throwback to some of our favorite bands from the mid-90s, so we thought Gather would be perfect.

MRR: SO YOU ALL TOOK PART IN THE TOTAL LIBERATION TOUR. WERE YOU INVOLVED IN THE MUSIC PART OF THE TOUR OR THE ACTIVISM PART OF THE TOUR?

Eva: Both.

Allan: Yeah, both.

Dustin: We had just formed as a band in February (2004) right after the Total Liberation Fest in January, and we were keeping in touch with the promoter of the tour. Maroon from Germany ended up not being able to come over to the US for the tour, so we were asked to fill in for them.

Allan: We were initially invited to go on just the West Coast portion of the tour. We were totally excited to be able to tour the West Coast with some of our favorite bands. Eventually more and more bands ended up dropping off the entire tour, so we were invited to do the nationwide tour.

Eva: We played music on the tour, but there was also a lot of activism. We did a lot of SHAC (Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty, www.shacamerica.net) demos and other actions that we would find out about during the tour. The tour was about music, but mainly the goal was to get people in the hardcore scene involved in activism as well.

Allan: It was a music tour to inspire activism in the hardcore scene.

Dustin: There were cities that we visited on the tour where we would find out that, just the day before, a paper mill got burned down or something like that. So, it was really warming to come to a city and have activism going on. When we left New York there was a big SHAC demo going on. It was a good excuse for people to get political and it was fucking awesome that it happened to coincide with amazing hardcore music.

MRR: SO, WHO WERE SOME OF THE ACTIVISTS ON THAT TOUR WHO WERE MOST INSPIRATIONAL TO YOU?

Dustin: On the tour itself, Brian D from the Crimethinc Collective (www.crimethinc.com) had some amazing things to say about connecting the freedom that we feel in a punk rock venue to the outside world and keeping that alive. That was inspiring to me.

Randy: Rod Coronado was definitely huge because he talked about

his involvement with the Animal Liberation Front and Earth First!, going to prison for the things that he did, giving up his freedom to save lives. That was really inspiring as well.

Eva: Andy Stepanian from SHAC was also really inspiring. He talked about the time he spent in prison for animal rights actions, and he drew the connection between human behavior in prison and the behavior of animals in captivity. They go crazy and they get violent. It was interesting to hear the comparisons because we are no different from nonhuman animals when put in those same situations. Both the prison system and laboratory animal captivity are equally fucked up.

Allan: For me, Andy was more inspirational compared with the other political speakers on the tour, because he was a lot closer to us in age and in perspective. He was a lot more involved with our daily activities on the tour. It made him a real person to us hardcore punk kids. I would like to add, it was not just the political speakers that were inspirational. I think that just being together as a band, and with the other bands—we all really collected our efforts to inspire each other.

Dustin: The last person I want to acknowledge for inspiring me is Evan from the Coalition Against Civilization (www.coalitionagainstcivilization.org). He spent a lot of time with us. He put up with a lot of shit, because he eats roadkill himself. He tried to pretend he wasn't very much of a hardcore kid, but then he would put on boxing gloves and take the microphone and sing Earth Crisis covers, so it was like, who the fuck are you kidding? But at the same time he was challenging, in some positive ways, to me personally. Those are some of the people who made the tour what it was. If the tour was a failure in the sense of losing a lot of money, and bands dropping off, it really was, but even if it was just for the 30 kids who stuck it out for the whole three weeks, it was an entirely life-changing and motivating event. So, if for nothing else, for those involved it was a success.

MRR: SOME OF MY FIRST EXPERIENCES WITH THE HARDCORE PUNK SCENE WERE WITH BANDS THAT WERE VERY POLITICAL IN THEIR VIEWS ON ANIMAL LIBERATION AND ANIMAL RIGHTS. ONE THING THAT STRUCK ME ABOUT GATHER IS THAT YOU HAVE THAT SAME INTENSITY IN YOUR LIVE SHOW AND IN YOUR LYRICS THAT REALLY GOT ME EXCITED ABOUT HARDCORE SO MANY YEARS AGO. I HAVE NOTICED A TREND IN THE PAST FEW YEARS WHERE HARDCORE PUNK BANDS, INCLUDING SOME AWESOME DIY BANDS TO WHOM I LOOKED UP, HAVE WATERED DOWN THEIR LYRICS, AND THEIR LIVES SHOWS CONTAIN NO POLITICAL CONTENT WHATSOEVER. I SEE A SLIGHT RESURGENCE IN THAT RADICAL ACTIVISM AND POLITICAL ASPECT OF HARDCORE WITH WHICH I GREW UP IN BANDS LIKE GATHER AND THOSE THAT WERE ON THE TOTAL LIBERATION TOUR. WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THE DE-POLITICIZATION OF HARDCORE PUNK?

Randy: I only consider bands that have political messages hardcore bands or punk bands. Bands that don't have anything to say, I don't consider them hardcore at all. Bands in the "hardcore" scene that don't say anything—I don't want to have anything to do with them. All of the bands that I look up to and that I think are hardcore today, really just stick to that traditional way of bringing important messages into their music and lives as well.

Allan: There are a lot of bands that you can technically consider "hardcore" because they have distorted guitars and breakdowns and pit calls and they scream—so stylistically, yes, it resembles hardcore.

MRR: SO MAYBE IT IS HARDCORE MUSIC, BUT NOT NECESSARILY A HARDCORE LIFESTYLE?

Allan: Oh, for sure. They are emulating a music style, but not necessarily bringing the emotion and political dialogue that I think is essential to hardcore and punk rock.

Eva: In the explanations in our zine I mention that one of the fundamental aspects that makes punk what it is, is the aspect of being a threat to the dominant culture. And when you eliminate that by taking out the politics and just making it about having fun—which is a crucial part, but that's not all it's about—when you eliminate the fundamental aspect of punk, then it's not punk anymore.

Allan: But that's not to say that hardcore can't be fun. I think hardcore should be fun, and fun is definitely integral to the experience. But when you strip the politics away from the music, I think you're left with nice tunes.

MRR: IN YOUR SONG "ESCALATE," YOU SING ABOUT STRAIGHTEDGE KIDS AND APATHY. AS AN ACTIVIST-ORIENTED STRAIGHT EDGE BAND, WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THE

CURRENT STRAIGHTEDGE MOVEMENT?

Allan: There are lots of bands out there that play "hardcore" style music but, to us, they aren't hardcore bands. I would say that most anyone could be straightedge. But that doesn't necessarily mean that they're taking a stand against anything, really. By definition, they may be straightedge because they are not partaking of drug culture, but that doesn't make them any sort of activist.

Eva: It is important to take a stand against drug culture because we are overwhelmed with the media advertising beer or whatever, so it is a big deal to reject that. But what is the point of keeping a sober mind and healthy body, if you're not going to use it to somehow better the world? It seems to be a sort of selfish purity thing. If you're not going to stand for anything other that abstaining from substances, then what is the point?

MRR: SO ARE YOU SAYING THAT STRAIGHT EDGE SHOULD BE USED AS A WEAPON OR A TOOL TO BETTER YOURSELF?

Eva: Yeah, it is not the end itself; it's the means to an end. It's not like the ultimate goal is to be pure and clean; it's to be pure and clean so that you can be most effective as an activist.

Randy: Straight edge began as a label for punks who rejected drug culture. The point of being punk is to resist all the forms of oppression facing us every day. So, what it really comes down to is, in order to be straight edge, you have to be an activist too. I'm not one to tell someone they're not straight edge, but in order to actually be effective as someone who is straight edge, you need to be an activist.

Allan: I think a lot of where "Escalate" came from was from our own observations here in our scene in Northern California. There are a good number of straight edge kids here. A lot of kids come out to the straight edge shows. We've also noticed, at the same time, even though they were straight edge, they could still be sexist, racist, etc. They could still be homophobic and uphold all of these values that we were trying to take a stand against.

Dustin: We realized that kids who were X-ing up didn't necessarily have anything in common with us just because we also had X's on the backs of our hands. So these fucking sexist assholes that eat meat and are fucking Christian losers, it was like, why the fuck would I ever want to stand alongside those losers? So, this song is just a call to those people to not be "merely" straight edge as we call it.

Allan: To me, that song isn't meant to belittle those people, but to hopefully gain them as an ally; to bring them to a place where they can realize that straight edge can be something that they can use to better their own lives, and to take a stand against things that are much greater than their own lives and their own ideas of purity.

Randy: Yeah, and fuck religion. [*laughs*]

Dustin: Yeah, Christians stay the fuck out of our scene [*laughs*]. And I want to say that it looks like veganism is on the upswing in the hardcore scene, which is awesome, and we're gonna do everything we can to perpetuate that. At the same time, we need to take a stand against sexism in the scene. Toughguy bullshit is on the way out, and if it means pointing people out every time they heckle and they say "bitch" or anything like that, we need to turn the tables on them and make them feel as uncomfortable as all of our female allies have been made to feel themselves.

MRR: I'VE BEEN ABLE SEE YOU ALL PLAY FOR THE LAST THREE NIGHTS IN A ROW, AND TWO NIGHTS AGO YOU PLAYED WITH 7 GENERATIONS FROM ORANGE COUNTY. GATHER HAS A SPLIT 7" COMING OUT WITH THEM SOON. CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FRIENDSHIP WITH THAT GROUP OF YOUNG MEN, AND HOW YOU CAME TO KNOW EACH OTHER?

Eva: They are our best friends. They've been a huge inspiration to us, being one of the only other vegan straight edge bands in California. They don't hesitate or water down their lyrics or message. I like how in-your-face they are. In between songs they are always addressing the issues in their lyrics. They are definitely an amazing band. We are really excited to have a split with them. We are going to write a big zine that will come with it and try to bring back having literature at shows, because I learned about most of the things that I believe in today through punk bands.

Randy: We want to push the political aspect of our music as hard as possible. It means so much to me because I got into hardcore hanging out with the kids from 7 Generations, and so it is incredible to be in a band that will be side by side with them in bringing back what hardcore was in the 1 0s.

Dustin: These guys were friends of ours before either of our bands existed, and I think we both came to the realization that hardcore kids were thirsty for activism again, so both bands formed around the same time, and have just been yelling out at the top of our lungs the message that fueled us as fifteen and sixteen year-olds. Lo and behold, kids who are those ages now are reacting the same way we did. I don't know if you have to go through a trough before you can go up to a swell again or not, but it's just kind of disappointing that there was such as big void. The end of the nineties was kind of a slippery slope to fall into—emotional music about relationships and

stuff—and that was appealing at first, but I'm just so grateful for a resurgence of political hardcore.

Allan: 7 Generations have been our friends for a long time, and we have played a lot of shows with them. One thing that is really unique about 7 Generations is that they are really true people. I think they are very true to the things that they sing about and talk about as a band, but beyond that, they are true to us as friends. I am really honored to be doing the split 7" with them.

MRR: A LOT OF PEOPLE GO VEGAN FOR A VARIETY OF REASONS; I RECENTLY LEARNED THAT EVA WENT VEGETARIAN AFTER READING RUDIMENTARY PENI LYRICS. WHAT DOES VEGANISM MEAN TO EACH OF YOU, AND WHY DID YOU EACH DECIDE TO ADOPT THIS LIFESTYLE?

Dustin: I was in a punk band called Political Suicide with my sister (Eva) and some friends in high school. The guitar player and my sister went vegetarian, and I was like, "What the fuck is going on?" I picked up a pamphlet that they had about testing on kittens for Proctor and Gamble products, and it was atrocious. It showed a kitten's head immobilized, with bars going in the eyes and mouth, and I was like, "That is so fucked up." I picked up a burger and I made the connection for the first time, and I felt like a hypocrite. So I went vegetarian. I went vegan two years later with Eva.

Eva: At first I saw all the flyers at punk shows and I read lyrics to my favorite band, Rudimentary Peni, which opened my eyes to how fucked up factory farms are and how horribly food animals are treated. To me it was simply about the individual animal's welfare. I just realized that, as an animal lover all of my life, I could not continue to support these things. Later, the idea of anthropocentrism—how fucked up it is that we as humans think that everything is at our disposal, and as long as something benefits humankind, it must be justified—kind of played into it all. And, as part of being an anarchist and rejecting hierarchies, it only made sense to go vegan.

Randy: I had a lot of friends who were vegan and vegetarian, and I listened to bands like Crass and Subhumans (UK), and Anti-Product who talked about animal suffering. They were so passionate about it, and that made me question myself and my actions. I wanted to learn about the industries that I was supporting and continued to learn about the suffering of animals. I went vegetarian pretty quickly after informing myself of what was going on. I went vegan after deciding that the dairy industry isn't any better than the flesh industry or the leather or animal testing industries.

Allan: I went vegetarian when I was fifteen. I started getting into hardcore when I was probably about fourteen. I feel like at that time there was a lot more dialogue going on about animal rights. I remember going to shows and picking up pamphlets and flyers and I had a little collection of them that just collected dust. I had a little pile in my room of literature, and every once in a while I would glance through it. When I was fifteen I was listening to a song called "Waste" by Good Riddance, and that's what made me decide to go vegetarian. It wasn't until four years later that I committed myself to going vegan.

MRR: WHAT I AM GETTING FROM YOU GUYS IS THAT GOING VEGAN WAS MORE THAN JUST A DIET CHANGE OR JUST FOR THE ANIMALS. IT WAS A RETHINKING OF THE WAY WE CONSUME ALL TYPES OF PRODUCTS; IT WAS THINKING ABOUT WHERE THINGS COME FROM, AND WHETHER THE CREATION OF THAT PRODUCT HAD A VIOLENT IMPACT ON ANIMALS OR THE EARTH, AND HOW CAPITALIST CONSUMER CULTURE PLAYS INTO THAT. WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR THOUGHTS ON CONSUMER CULTURE?

Randy: The ideal situation would be to eliminate capitalist consumption altogether, to eliminate the possibility of corporations surviving in our society. Also, to stop supporting animal exploitation industries or corporations that openly exploit human labor such as Nike or Wal-Mart. It can be taken further through dumpster diving, which is a huge way to reduce your consumption and dependency on the cycle of consumerism. I think those things are very important, as well as direct attacks on corporations that continue to exploit.

Dustin: Veganism and straight edge, for me, have both always been more than just the fact of not eating meat or not drinking beer for purity reasons. There has always been the aspect of anarchism in there: not wanting to support industries that make profit by polluting people's bodies, torturing sentient creatures, and raping the land at the same time. Those things by themselves have always been tools in reshaping the worldview that has been whispered to me since I was born. It's still a process. One good anecdote to illustrate that is that I was vegan for two years before I was really convinced of the individuality of each animal that is saved when you go vegan. I would just add up all of the figures about how bad it is for the topsoil and the atmosphere, and how many gallons of water are used to produce meat versus grain. So I was vegan for two years before I really internalized the very real individuality of every animal. Since then, veganism has been so much easier. I love veganism, and for me, the end result is reducing consumption and lightening my footstep.

Randy: Even things like wheat and modern agriculture at the scale that we have undertaken–these are still exploiting the earth, and as of right now there is not a way to get a large amount of people the leave that system. Modern agriculture is based upon the idea that we should be able to use the earth in whatever way we want. We are trying to fight against the idea that we can just take anything, and make it how we want it. There are other beings out there whose lives should not be dictated by humans.

MRR: IF SOMEONE IS INTERESTED IN WHAT YOU GUYS HAVE TO SAY, WHAT ARE SOME WEBSITES, BOOKS, MAGAZINES, OR OTHER RESOURCES THAT YOU WOULD RECOMMEND CHECKING OUT?

Allan: For those who are interested in veganism, a good website to check out is www.veganoutreach.org

At this sites, you can learn all the reasons why a vegan lifestyle is better for animals, the environment, and your health. For further information on veganism and compassionate living, I recommend reading *A Diet for a New America* by John Robbins, *Animal Liberation* by Peter Singer, and *Free The Animals* by Ingrid Newkirk. Also I personally recommend *Days of War, Nights of Love* (Crimethinc.), *Ishmael* by Daniel Quinn, and *Black Hawk*; an autobiography.

Randy: The rest of Daniel Quinn's work has been pretty influential to me as well. I would also suggest checking out *No Compromise* magazine, Bite Back website (www.directaction.info), and Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty (www.SHACamerica.net) for info on people that are actually saving animals' lives. *Green Anarchy* is also a pretty good zine. For humyn political issues I like *Industrial Society and Its Future* by Ted Kaczyski, *We are Everywhere: The Irresistible Rise of Global Anticapitalism*, and most of what CrimethInc. has put out. The Plus Minus Records website also has an online version of the *Hardcore/Punk Guide to Christianity* that is pretty awesome.

Eva: Derrick Jensen's *The Culture of Make Believe* is an awesome book, as is Carrol Adam's *The Sexual Politics of Meat*, and right now I'm reading *The Unnatural Order* by Jim Mason, and that rules so far too.

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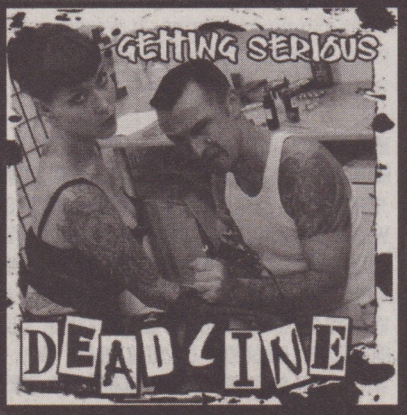

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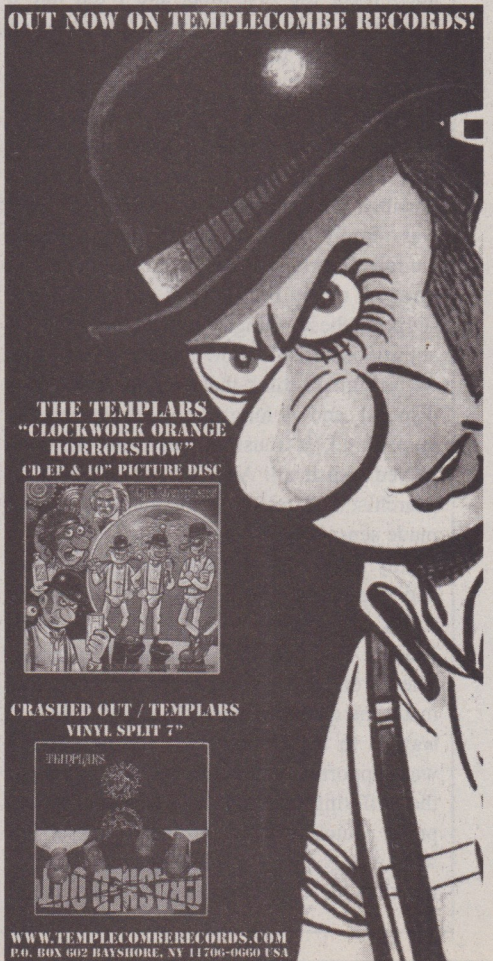

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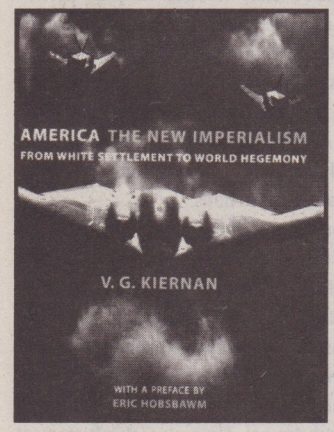


America: The New Imperialism—From White Settlement to World Hegemony
V.G. Kiernan
Preface by Eric Hobsbawn
440 pages • $18 ppd.
Verso
180 Varick St.
New York, NY 10014-4606
www.versobooks.com

American history swings like John Henry's hammer—cocksure, self-destructive, & proclaiming a banging progress as it cleaves & consumes. The stuff of protest *and* marching songs. A manifest destiny that doesn't end on either coast. Tales overripe for deconstruction.

Which makes Kiernan's history of US imperialism so interesting. A Scottish historian, Kiernan gives us an imminently relevant overview of America's trajectory from a place close to our own former English colonizers.

As a writer, Kiernan is a pleasure to read. Crisp, well-crafted sentences. Clean chapter breaks. The biting asides are a nice touch—Britain gets referred to as "never weary of ill-doing," and Texan Sam Houston's "charm and dignity" can only come from three years spent with the Cherokee. Even obvious things like "for some military men 'Darwinian' ideas had a professional appeal" need to be written, read, & said aloud. Better, he follows policies like pre-emptive strikes from the Indian wars into the Cold War & our current morasses.

Context, larger view, pattern recognition, bullshit detector & footnoted sources—these make for a worthwhile history book. And *America: The New Imperialism* consistently delivers. In a better world, this would be a mandatory high school textbook. Bloody details of colonial conquest are not sidestepped or dismissed as "the white man's burden." The narrative follows the course of empire into our current "soft power" whereby the extended arm of the free-market works hand-in-glove with the fist of our 725 or so military bases around the world.

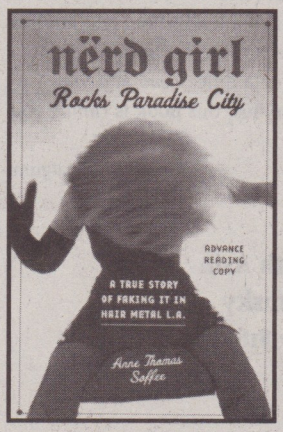
Chapters open with such wry lines as "Whatever messianic gleams shot across their thoughts, Americans were preparing for greatness in a strictly businesslike way, by getting rich...it was the first time that a purely bourgeois, money-making society had ever existed, and it took for granted that the way it found itself behaving was the natural way of human beings freed from feudal fetters..." Kiernan follows the founding belief in Providence (and progress measured in material gains & land expansion) throughout the book, making the US's unwavering course inherent from this country's beginnings.

Whether economic, philosophical, or historical, Kiernan's analyses let US foolhardiness show itself time & again. Like when he paraphrases notable reactionaries saying, "Any opponents of America must be depraved wretches: there is a glimpse here of the same moralizing conviction that was to identify communists with homosexuals." Or, the brutal math of "One calculation was that killing Indians cost the government an average of a million dollars a head; more accurately, the direct cost of a campaign against the Modocs in Oregon was put at $355,000, when their claim for a reasonable allotment of land could have been met for a twentieth of the sum." Emergent American literature figures here as well—a shorter aside cast Melville's *Moby Dick* as grave parable for American empire, and offers a darker, prescient view on Walt Whitman's reckless patriotic enthusiasm. Or this irrefutable note:

> There was the practical obstacle, as before and after the war, that most Americans were too comfortably off to want to be soldiers or sailors. Like middle-class Englishmen at the time of the Napoleonic or Crimean wars, they might periodically fall into a warlike fever, but without feeling any inclination to don uniform themselves; they preferred the fighting to be done by someone else.

That quote's not directly referring to the Iraq war's current low of recruitment/retention of soldiers, but the analysis remains. Same with wars being "unnecessarily and unconstitutionally begun by the President." But take heart—the epilogue ends: "the colossal failure of the Iraq occupation has reopened a historical space for resistance."

—Travis Fristoe



Nerd Girl Rocks Paradise City: A True Story Of Faking It In Hair Metal L.A.
Anne Thomas Soffee
242 pages • $22.95
Chicago Review Press
814 North Franklin Street
Chicago, IL 60610

I liken reading this autobiography to eating cookies—it is totally enjoyable, it lacks any substantial nutritional value, and I finished wanting more.

In the mid-80s, Anne Thomas Soffee was a Virginian punk rocker nurturing her dream of becoming the next Lester Bangs (one of rock's more inspired and irreverent journalists/critics). Fast forward to the turn of the decade and she is finished with college and eager to pursue her dreams, no matter how impulsive or unprepared she may be. So she ends up in L.A., having arrived on the downside of the Sunset Strip hair metal glory daze.

She struggles to find some work—any work—relating to the field of rock journalism only to learn quickly and regrettably that the occupation is already flooded with freelance suck-ups, hacks, and industry tools. What's worse, her snide wit and choice turns of a phrase ultimately burns bridges. Sad too, because the genre she was trying to document was so full of *make-fun-of-me-please* fodder and she was the first person to spell it out for anyone who would read/print her.

Soffee has a fantastic way of detailing mini tragedies and then itemizing them in a single sentence, making the dramas somehow greater than the sum

of their parts; thankfully no tragedy is sacred enough to escape her sense of humor. This includes addict boyfriends, roommates who are muscle-bound and unsound, alcoholism, the L.A. riots, and ultimately her failure to become the next Lester Bangs. During her stay in L.A. Soffee never quite reaches the all-access lifestyle and recognition she was hoping for, but she still gets a full rock 'n' roll experience replete with backstage passes, loser musician boyfriends, drag bars, drugs, celebrity run-ins, poverty, and the common activity of produce shopping alongside Danzig. Speaking of name-dropping, Soffee makes reference to (and often includes stories of) Henry Rollins, Iggy Pop, Sideshow Bob, Nigel Tufnel, Riki Ratchman, Ed Grimley, Pamela des Barnes, etc. It's a star-studded read but it's not *Us* or *People* magazine, it's real-life run-ins with Vinnie Vincent's wig. It's honest tales of Kelsey Grammar's laughably oversized ego. It's ridiculous and it's damned funny, much like how we look back on the 80s L.A. metal scene.

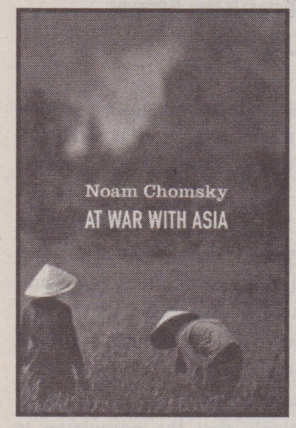
What should absolutely be mentioned, and something that becomes apparent in the first few pages of this book, is the author's complete and total nerdiness when it comes to music knowledge. She doesn't call herself a nerd because it's a chic thing to do—this lady is a *geek*. In her words:

> [If you weren't born with the gene for obsession]...You are spared the endless search for a 12" copy of "Miss You" on pink vinyl with a picture sleeve, backed with "Far Away Eyes." You will never have to explain to the policeman who pulled you over for weaving that you were merely looking for a music store that might be open at 11:30 at night because you just realized that the bass riff of The Who's "Substitute" is a direct steal from "Nineteenth Nervous Breakdown" and you've absolutely got to find it right now so you can listen and compare...you will also never know the joy of rooting through three boxes of LPs on someone's dew-covered front lawn and finally unearthing the Holy Grail, an actual 3D cover mono copy of *Their Satanic Majesties Request*.

(Mental note: Make Anne partner in next game of Rock 'n' Roll Trivial Pursuit.)

For anyone who reads rock biographies this book will help add another perspective to the fantasy. For anyone who has an interest in 80s hair metal this is required reading. For anyone looking for a quick read and who isn't afraid to laugh out loud while reading it on the bus, this book is calling you.

—Craigums



At War with Asia
Noam Chomsky
242 pages • $18.95
AK Press
674-A 23rd St.
Oakland, CA 94612-1163
www.akpress.org

At War with Asia, originally published in 1970, is structured as a compilation of six related but separate essays on the American War in Southeast Asia. Half are of a more general nature, exploring the motives and half-century-in-the-making global political strategies that informed (or obfuscated) the decisions made by the top brass, and the other three are more specific looks at the adjacent theaters in Laos and Cambodia and also North Vietnam. Included within are the customary Chomsky-unearthed discoveries of just how deviously calculating were the methods of US forces in achieving their even more devious and calculating goals (e.g. the defoliation of the countryside in order to force populations to relocate in urban areas, thus neutralizing Marxism's rural-based approach and benefits). It's difficult to decide which is the more depressing subject—the twisted, dehumanized theories of such Orwellian double-speak as "pacification" and "population re-dispersal" or the eventual inevitable result of such euphemisms from on-the-(scorched)-ground reports of the physical bombing targets (i.e. towns and villages).

The first two essays, "Indochina and the American Crisis" and "After Pinkville" primarily deconstruct and delineate the antecedents of the Vietnam War, the grand, sweeping, long-term economic, military and social plans begun at the end of World War II in conjunction with the massive military-industrial complex it spawned. The bellicose baby needed further (if not incessant) feeding and thus more playgrounds needed be found (or created) around the world where the war-toys could be flung. This, combined with the US's interest in containing a region that opted for an economic system outside of its own, are two explanations (among an array of contributing factors) most closely examined as to the war's origins. Also dismantled are the laughable "moral" argument, the condemnation of domestic opposition and the rejection of validity on the charge of United States war crimes.

Obvious as it may sound, one of the more compelling aspects of the essays is simply the year in which they were written. It's almost eerie to read such chillingly prescient accounts as that of a Phnom Penh diplomat stating that "We probably shall look back on these days as the opening phases of the Cambodian civil war," which Chomsky himself couldn't have predicted would prove so Cassandric. Chomsky's perspective in these tracts has the uncharacteristic air of hopeless cynicism, understandable given the date, still a good two or three years before major troop withdrawal. However, the historical retrospection the reader inevitably brings to the book alternately leads into one of the major failings or rather missed opportunities of this repressed edition. Since we now know whether events did and did not occur as predicted (reports of North Vietnamese "confidence" of victory in the former; all of Cambodia in the later), it might serve as useful addendum to have a few current reflections by Chomsky with his own thirty-five year hindsight. In particular, the events that would occur a mere five years later in Cambodia would seem to justify at least some editorializing on the subsequent trajectory of the then-sympathetic Communist Cambodians (a.k.a. Khmer Rouge). Additionally, the turn in recent decades to relative capitalism in Vietnam would also be of interest given the detailed depiction of socialist society described during Chomsky's visit to North Vietnam.

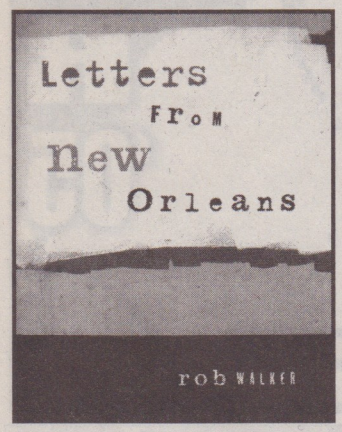
Nonetheless, even left unamended, the snapshots of Laos, Cambodia and North Vietnam amid the darkest seething depths of war(s) in 1970 provide compelling food-for-thought for the reader. The strongest material in the book, it's intriguing to compare events in the respective ancillary theaters of Cambodia and Laos, with ostensibly similar Communist organizations—the Khmer Rouge and the Pathet Lao respectively. Both were loudly self-proclaimed "peoples' revolutions," both heavily rural in their support base, both utilizing constant explanation and "re-education" with peasants and soldiers alike, and both fiercely anti-bourgeoisie that egregiously often transformed into anti-intellectual (most notoriously lethally in the one case).

The only truly significant fault I found in these pages though, is that Chomsky in his not unjustified effort to follow the US blood trail is seemingly all too ready to simultaneously disregard the role of corrupt inept aggressive local politicians who, he admits, "rarely...have a reputation for honesty and integrity" (p.104). At several points, particularly in regards to Cambodia, it can be argued that many key blunders on the part of regional rulers and decision-makers were made quite apart from and unaffected by US policy. For a slightly different view on how events devolved, see Henry Kamm's (a reporter whom Chomsky often cites, with much praise) *Cambodia: Report from a Stricken Land*.

A few minor complaints notwithstanding, it should go without saying that this is a near essential report on a perspective of the Vietnam War, its origins and its spill-over effects on neighboring lands you're not likely to find in such sharp detail elsewhere. The "Laos" and "North Vietnam" sections are additionally recommendable for featuring Chomsky's most intimate and accessible

writing I've read yet. Both are moving diary-esque accounts of personal visits to lands immersed in war and the people he meets and their stories he hears (the account of a wartime linguistics lecture is particularly interesting). His chronicle of North Vietnam is a cross-section of the minute inter-workings of a Communist society, his obvious admiration of which is all the more respectable for the skepticism he levels at the same time. I should also note that the film *Fog of War*—an interview by Errol Morris of Robert McNamara, Secretary of Defense under Kennedy and Johnson and one of the primary architects of the US's policies in Vietnam—would be the perfect accompaniment to this book. Both will leave you amazed that nuclear weapons weren't used again in the second half of the century and are indispensable insights into the nature of the origins of power and its perpetuation at the expense of innocent lives.

—Elliott Lange



Letters from New Orleans
Rob Walker
220 Pages • $12.95
Garrett County Press
828 Royal St. #248
New Orleans, LA 70116
www.gcpress.com

Letters from New Orleans began as a semi-regular letter that Rob Walker sent out after moving with his girlfriend, E, to New Orleans. At first the letters were sent "to friends and later, to strangers who were interested for one reason or another."

Each chapter covers a different aspect of the city, and most describe Walker's personal experience with a person or people related to whatever is being covered. In this way, the book has a deeply personal way of relating to the reader no matter what Walker is writing about.

Early in the book, Walker and E attend services at a black Baptist church. After enjoying a couple of hours of sermons and music, the minister calls attention to their presence and the entire congregation applauds them. Walker's reaction is horrific, mortifying embarrassment. Not only is this story funny, it shows Walker's genuine modesty. His interest is in learning as much as he can from African-American culture in New Orleans, not in being noticed for being there.

The explorations into different facets of New Orleans take a multitude of different forms, from the obvious (Mardi Gras and parade culture) to the hidden, such as Yvonne's bar, in Walker's neighborhood, which he first thinks is abandoned, but later discovers is open, and contains a "clutch of secret-society mid-day drinkers."

Many of the subjects covered in *Letters from New Orleans* are placed within a context that may elevate Walker from mere travel writer to historian.

At one point, Walker notices a lot of people under the I-10 freeway hanging out, chatting, sometimes playing dominoes or simply sitting in lawn chairs. While this at first seems a little bizarre, Walker pokes around a little and learns that before the freeway, there was a broad boulevard, with a great grassy median strip, on which people would spend weekends and evenings simply relaxing and socializing, and what strikes many as a little odd is just a continuation of an old tradition.

Later in the book, Walker delves into the origins of the song "St. James Infirmary." While he is unable to connect the song to New Orleans in a concrete way, he reveals fascinating facts about the song's roots and shows that the song is as New Orleans as it could be: haunting, confusing, and ever-changing.

The respect that Walker holds for his subjects coupled with his quirky and likeable tastes make *Letters from New Orleans* a fantastic read. It is more than just a good book. Its insider-outsider perspective and street-level historical explorations make it essential for anyone interested in New Orleans.

—Andy Shoup

Five Years in the Warsaw Ghetto
Bernard Goldstein
256 pages • $19
AK Press
674-A 23rd Street
Oakland, CA 94612-1163
www.akpress.org

This was a tough book to read and is even tougher to review. The topic of the Warsaw ghetto is just so overwhelming. Goldstein's account of the events leading up to World War II, the establishment of the Warsaw Ghetto by the Nazis, and the organization of underground resistance to the Nazi occupation is riveting. Bernard Goldstein was very active as a Socialist and a labor organizer prior to World War II. Once Warsaw fell to the Nazis, the city's half million Jews were forced into the ghetto and five years of unimaginable terror ensued. The numbers alone are mind boggling—there were only ten thousand survivors out of that half million.

Goldstein's experiences during those years, and those of countless others, are presented in painful detail and one gets a very vivid idea of the wholesale destruction exacted. One of the striking aspects of Goldstein's memoir is the extremes to which people can not only adapt to and live with, but also actively resist. There were a wide variety of reactions to the events of the Nazi occupation. Many simply denied that circumstances could be as grim as they were, despite every indication that things could and would get indescribably worse. Others organized resistance with all means available and took risks at every turn to fight the course of events.

Goldstein was one of those crucial in that organization. Many of Warsaw's Jews worked tirelessly to maintain some quality of life in he midst of the squalor and degradation of the Nazi occupation. Once a sufficient number of people were convinced that Hitler's intention was indeed extermination and that no one was safe from this eventuality, armed insurgence was planned in earnest. The sheer amount of determination in the face of such insurmountable odds is awe-inspiring. It's hard to imagine how one would react in response to the terror, the anger, the hopelessness of seeing your entire community, your family and friends, and your previous life destroyed. Goldstein gives a very detailed look at how people did react to such conditions, whether it be with courage and tireless effort, with despair and resignation, or with betrayal and self-interest.

The stories of the Warsaw ghetto are both terrifying and amazing. The efforts to procure arms and funds, to make the outside world aware of the plight of Jews in occupied Poland, to communicate with each other, and to ensure the safety of comrades was fraught with danger. However, it was apparent to Goldstein and others that the stakes were so high as to surpass a matter of life and death. They came to the conclusion that it was preferable to die fighting than to perish in acquiescence with the brutality of the German occupation. Goldstein gives an amazingly detailed account of the efforts that this resistance entailed, as well as the supreme effort required simply to survive in the midst of mass murder, disease, and starvation. His memoir is an unflinching look at the events, heartbreaking but ultimately hopeful.

—Tresse

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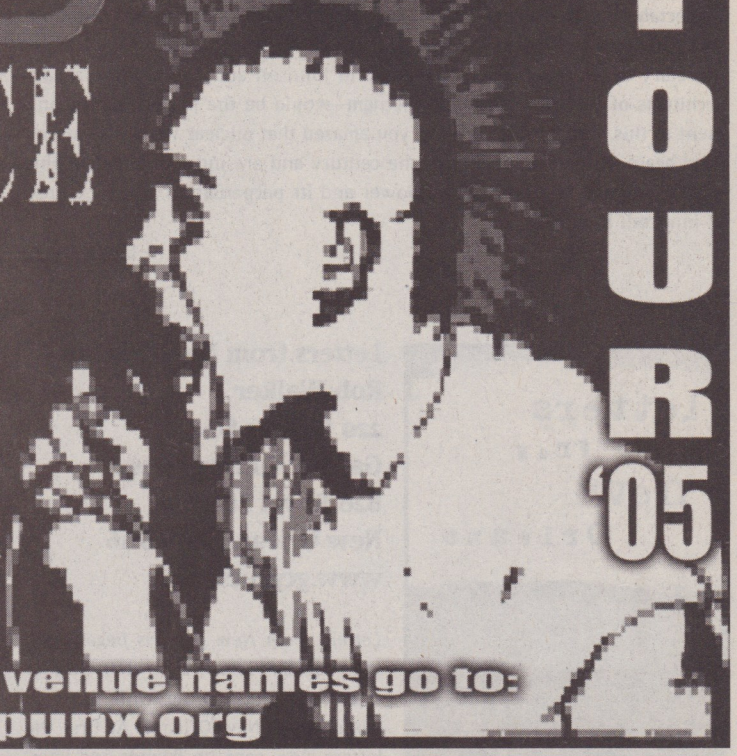

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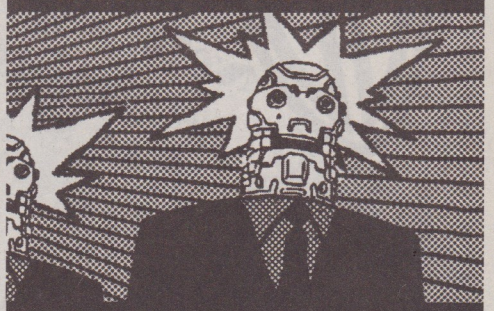

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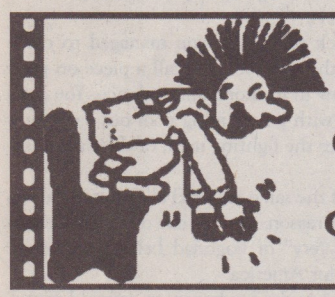


BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

BULLSHIT. PUNK ROCK.

Making a great music documentary is difficult. Music needs to be heard and performances need to be seen, so no matter how many times and different ways a talking head tells a viewer how great a musician, band, or record label is, they probably won't believe it. I've tried, but most people don't seem to listen to me. I used to get very pissed off when I would tell someone about a great new band and three or four months later that same person would tell me I should check out the aforementioned band. Usually I would glare disbelievingly at the person while my friends would laugh their asses off. The person would never seem to care either. They probably went off and mentioned the band to someone else.

All of this nonsense is in my mind while I am watching **Voodoo Rhythm—The Gospel Of Primitive Rock 'n' Roll**, a documentary about the Swiss label run by the wonderful Lightning Beat-man. If you know me, you know I love the music put out by this label. I am listening to The Monsters *Jungle Noise* as I write this. I even pursued this documentary. It is not something that I usually do, but I had to ask for a copy of this film. I really wanted to see it.

Voodoo Rhythm—The Gospel Of Primitive Rock 'n' Roll is an exceptionally well-shot documentary. It is rare that you see an underground music documentary that looks this good. The film focuses on the label's founder Beat-man and the various bands on the label talking about what it is they do and why they do it. Why? Because they have to. That is all fine, but it is the live performances that make this come to life. I have never seen most of these bands: The Monsters, The Dead Brothers, King Khan, The Whatzloves, Zeno Tornado, and The Boney Google Brothers. Each band is trashy and primitive rock and roll, just like the label advertises. It is actually kind of weird to see all these European hillbillies.

The only thing I would ask of Voodoo Rhythm is to sign more bands with women in them. I think director M.A. Littler realized this too and that is why he included the Velvet Hammer Burlesque in the film. They haven't released any records on Voodoo Rhythm, but there needed to be some females in the film. Why wasn't Beat-man's wife interviewed? I would like to know what she has to say about all of this. www.slowboatfilms.com

In contrast, **Billy Childish Is Dead** was made by a true amateur. Graham Bendel was just a guy who wanted to get a film made about Billy Childish. The opening scene in the film is Billy meeting with director/photographer Larry Clark, who apparently wanted to turn Childish's autobiography *My Fault* into a movie. This sequence is odd in that it seems completely out of place with the rest of the documentary other than it seems that Childish may be taking the piss out of Clark. Clark tells Childish that he saw Thee Headcoats play in New York and when Childish started performing some slower gospel numbers, he yelled out, "Bullshit. Punk rock." Childish tells him with a big grin on his face that he remembers hearing that. Yeah, right.

Bendel couldn't get a film made about Billy Childish so he decided to do it himself. He borrowed a video camera and edited it on a computer. Shots may be shaky and improperly framed. Some are overexposed, but Bendel has full access to his subject. We get an intimate portrait of the man. We see Childish shaving with a straight razor, of course, while Bendel questions him. Bendel isn't afraid to ask anything. He asks former band mate Bruce Brand about Childish being molested as a child. Childish discusses it calmly and openly, but Brand is understandably kind of freaked out.

Billy Childish Is Dead surprisingly spends a majority of the time focusing on Billy Childish's art. Childish is a painter who admires Vincent Van Gogh. He even did a show that was a tribute to Van Gogh that he entitled "A Commercial Suicide." A woman unfamiliar with Childish is questioned about the pictures she sees. She comments that the artist has a great sense for Van Gogh. He doesn't simply copy the artist. Childish is a serious painter. He was involved in forming an art movement called Stuckism that has a manifesto and protests the art museums' alleged anti-painting policies dressed as clowns. Unfortunately, Childish doesn't dress in a clown suit.

What I really want to see are the bands. There is plenty of footage here to satisfy me. There is early footage of the Pop Rivets, Thee Milkshakes, Thee Headcoats and Childish's latest band The Buff Medways.

Bendel insists that Billy Childish should be a huge celebrity. He was asked to be on the reality show *Celebrity Big Brother*, which he fortunately turned down. Jack White painted Childish's name on his arm when he played on Top Of The Pops. Kurt Cobain had a bunch of Childish records in his collection. Artist Tracey Emin, a former girlfriend, allegedly owes all her success to her relationship with Childish. The list goes on.

Childish, however, seems to be content with his present status. He jokes about a neighborhood person calling him "Hitler." When Childish confronted the person, he says it is because Childish has Hitler's mustache. Childish's mustache is a large, full one that curls on the ends. It doesn't look anything like Hitler's. Childish points this out to the man so he changes it to being because Childish rides Hitler's bicycle. Childish jokes, "I didn't know Hitler was known for his bicycle." (www.cherryred.co.uk)

I was completely surprised by the history of the Sheffield, UK post-punk scene. **Made In Sheffield. The Birth Of Electronic Pop** tells the story of a truly bizarre music scene. Known nationally for such popular bands as The Human League, ABC, Heaven 17, and Def Leppard, I wouldn't expect there was much I needed to know. Yet, there is an interesting story there. Most of the bands came out of the first wave of punk by doing strange electronic music. Synthesizers and singers with nothing much else. Yes, these bands that seemed in the 80s to be very un-punk "new wave" started out influenced by Kraftwerk and Eno and were very minimalist, experimental, and arty.

The thing that isn't really explained, although it probably wouldn't be possible, is how they quickly changed musical styles to be simply pop bands. A member of ABC sort of explains that they stopped doing their original band Vice Versa and wanted to try something new. They locked themselves up in their rehearsal space for a year working on songwriting and when they emerged with their new sound and look as ABC the girls went wild so they knew they had something. Then they were on Top Of The Pops. The other bands saw this and somehow they changed too.

Human League released two albums, but weren't having any real success. So two of the founding members get kicked out and the band adds a female singer and a new pop sensibility. Success is achieved. The two ousted members go on to form Heaven 17 and have some success as well.

What I like most about **Made In Sheffield. The Birth Of Electronic Pop.** are the bands I haven't heard of: Artery and The Extras. Artery has a Joy Division-esque sound and intensity. The leader singer Mick Fiddler dances and flails in a frantic fashion throwing himself on the ground. The Extras members fondly reminisce about how they were once the most popular band in Sheffield. They just made the wrong decision to leave for London when people started paying attention to bands from Sheffield. They jokingly recall returning home as losers and being taunted about it for several years after.

Made In Sheffield. The Birth Of Electronic Pop. is fortunate that all the bands have been well-documented. There is some great early footage of all the bands. Hearing that The Human League and Def Leppard played a show together in the early days is funny too. (www.plexifilm.com)

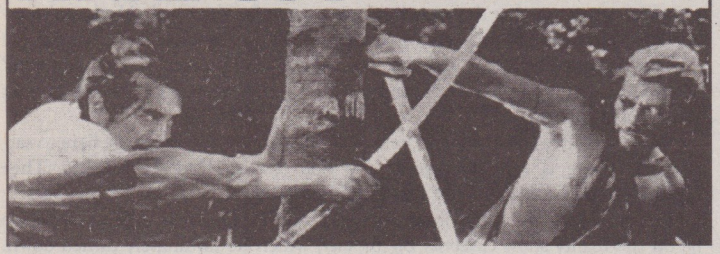
I suppose it is a good thing that **MC5 Kick Out The Jams** is available on

DVD. It is just hard to for me to pay attention to it for any extended period of time. I love the music of the MC5. I love to watch them perform. But I can't stay focused on this.

MC5 Kick Out The Jams is a collection of 8-mm films shot by Leni Sinclair in the 60s. The films do not have sound, so Cary Loren has assembled them to a soundtrack. The music recordings don't seem to go with the film. You get a lot of repetition of shots. I supposed the effect is meant to be trippy, but it just doesn't hold my attention. The DVD also includes a bonus interview with MC5 manager John Sinclair from 2003. That couldn't hold my attention either. (www.musicvideodistributors.com)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to me c/o MRR, PO Box 406760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760. Email me at carolynmrr@juno.com. If you have a film screening in San Francisco. I will go see it.

FINAL CUT BY STEVEN SPINALI



WAR GAMES

If you saw Trey Parker's **Baseketball** (was I the only soul on the planet who liked this movie, and who actually paid to see it in a theater?), you witnessed an amalgam of sports gone strangely awry. The movie wasn't quite *South Park*, but the concept had to make you smile.

On the other hand, murderball is a *real* sport—a cross between basketball and rugby, or something like that—with one special feature: only quadriplegics are eligible to play. That wouldn't seem possible. But (as the documentary **Murderball** informs us), there are different levels of functionality for a "quad." Each level is given a point value, and a team cannot exceed a certain point total on the court at any one moment. A sport is born.

When you see these players wheel onto the court for the first time, it looks more like a match between gladiators. The custom wheelchairs, which are fitted with reinforced (and deeply pitted) aluminum siding, look like Roman weapons. When the players cross the court, they must incapacitate key players of the opposing team however they can—pushing them away like bumper cars, boxing them in, or knocking wheelchairs on their sides. The word "foul" doesn't seem to exist in murderball.

Working from an article they wrote for *Maxim*, filmmakers Alex Rubin and Dana Adam Shapiro have chanced on a sport that apparently has an international following. Of course, the sport's name was its first calamity: corporate sponsors could take notice only after it had been re-dubbed "wheelchair rugby."

International standings are typically dominated by the United States, but the new millennium saw new fault lines forming in the North America-dominated game.

As it happens, Joe Soares—who looks rather like a brooding Terry Bradshaw, or maybe his evil twin—had been the most celebrated player in history. Trophies line the walls to the ceiling from years of leading US teams to victory, but the balding, aging warrior was declared too old to play with the younger guys. Proud and vindictive, Soares switched sides and joined the Canadian team as coach. He brought with him the American playbook, and a detailed knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of every player.

This infuriates the US team, and in particular Mark Zupan, their toughest and most skilled player. The victim of a truck accident when he was 18, he hasn't talked to his best friend (the truck's driver) for years. It's possible that Soares' betrayal troubles him even more than losing a childhood friend. Zupan claims that if Soares were on fire, he "wouldn't piss on him to put it out." You get the feeling that if Soares *weren't* on fire, Zupan would have no such reservations.

Murderball begins from the point of Soares' defection through the world championship and finally to the Athens Olympics. The matches between teams US and Canada are last-second, one-point nail-biters that **Murderball** is fortunate to capture in all their in-your-face intensity.

The filmmakers also follow the US team as they visit Walter Reade Army Hospital, where casualties from the Iraq war struggle with the realities of being handicapped for the rest of their lives. One young vet is despondent and not particularly interested in therapy; but when Zupan gives him a chance to ride in his tournament wheelchair, it's like the bad weather clears for a few minutes.

The players struggle with their bodies; in one long scene, we see first hand what an ordeal simply getting washed and dressed can be. In another scene, a kid asks player Greg Lujano how he can eat pizza with just his elbow. It's a basic thing most people take for granted, but one of **Murderball's** strengths is its ability to jar the viewer to an understanding of these men's difficulties without rubbing your face in it. In fact, each of the players seems to feel that they'd really started really living only since getting their handicaps.

The irony, as the film suggests, is that the young men injured at Iraq are likely to be next generation of murderball players.

The subject always seems to come back to Iraq. If you managed to catch **Gunner Palace** (reviewed here a few months ago), you'll recall a piece on post-Bush Iraq that was close to **Apocalypse Now** in its moral ambivalence. You got a tour of U-Day Hussein's palacial bedroom with a swimming pool out back, now filled with tanned GIs. Less memorable were the fighting men, or their skirmishes in downtown Baghdad.

Occupation: Dreamland covers some of the same material as **Gunner Palace,** but with a more concentrated vision. The reason why is that directors Garrett Scott and Ian Olds leave the relative "safety" of Baghdad behind and enter Fallujah—the flashpoint of Iraqi's mistrust for America.

In one harangue, a middle-aged Iraqi is just the loudest in an agitated crowd. "How are things better?" he moans, going on about the lack of public safety, good roads, or any kind of jobs. Later, a younger man is deeply cynical of the filmmaker himself, challenging why he's even there. There may be many Iraqis who welcome U.S. involvement, but the main image you get is of high (and sometimes unrealistic) hopes having been dashed. There's also sense of violation.

The soldiers themselves, from the 82nd Airborne Division, often wonder why they're there, though their political views vary widely. One soldier, an ardent Bush supporter, says that it's only about time America came in to straighten things out; it's ironic, then, how much he really dislikes being there. "I hate this country," he spits, and even his liberal roommate has to nod and agree.

The problem—and this is something that only a Private or Specialist would really appreciate—is that the men in uniform feel they have no purpose being somewhere they aren't wanted, much putting their lives on the line for it.

Often, they're asked to engage the public in small acts of public relations. It would be a great idea if there weren't a nearly impassable language gap. Often, only one man in an entire unit can translate back and forth. No wonder native Fallujians entertain such a fundamental mistrust of American intentions; they can't hear the reassurances of American propaganda.

This parallels the experience of Robert McNamara during Vietnam. Long after hostilities had ceased, he sat down with a Viet Kong general and asked him why his people had resisted the American presence so insistently. The general responded simply that he regarded the US as an invader. McNamara was shocked and outraged; didn't he know they were fighting for the same thing—liberation of his country?

Thirty years later, the same thing seems to be happening, albeit on a reduced scale. A war of liberation is being waged on a country that didn't ask to be liberated.

Occupation: Dreamland was filmed just before the Marines took over operations and aggressions intensified. As a result, it's easier for directors Scott and Olds to capture the candid reactions of men on both sides of the conflict. One young Specialist confides that he kind of understands the Iraqi point of view; he wouldn't be too happy if an army marched in to occupy some part of America. This reality is reflected on the faces of one Iraqi man after another. One fuming man feels the dignity of their women had been violated by US military men detaining their women for days, or searching their wives' quarters at night.

When the men return to their barracks, their entertainment is usually a 10" color TV, or just as often, their own personal worries. This isn't helped by the intrusion of hard-nosed recruiters who regularly address the unit, declaring that the men lack skills to make it in the real world. They might as well stay and fight, they counsel. This comes as a clear irony to many of the men, who have been sold on the idea that they'd be learning marketable skills in the army. One soldier confides that they're on the lowest level, useful to higher-ups only if their lives are at risk on the front line.

Occupation: Dreamland comes off as an unusually candid look at the Iraqi conflict. It concentrates on the soldiers, but doesn't flinch at showing the reactions of the Iraqi man in the street. (It's interesting that in Fallujah, there doesn't seem to be such thing as a *woman* on the street.) But people on both sides agree that the conflict seems impossible to resolve.

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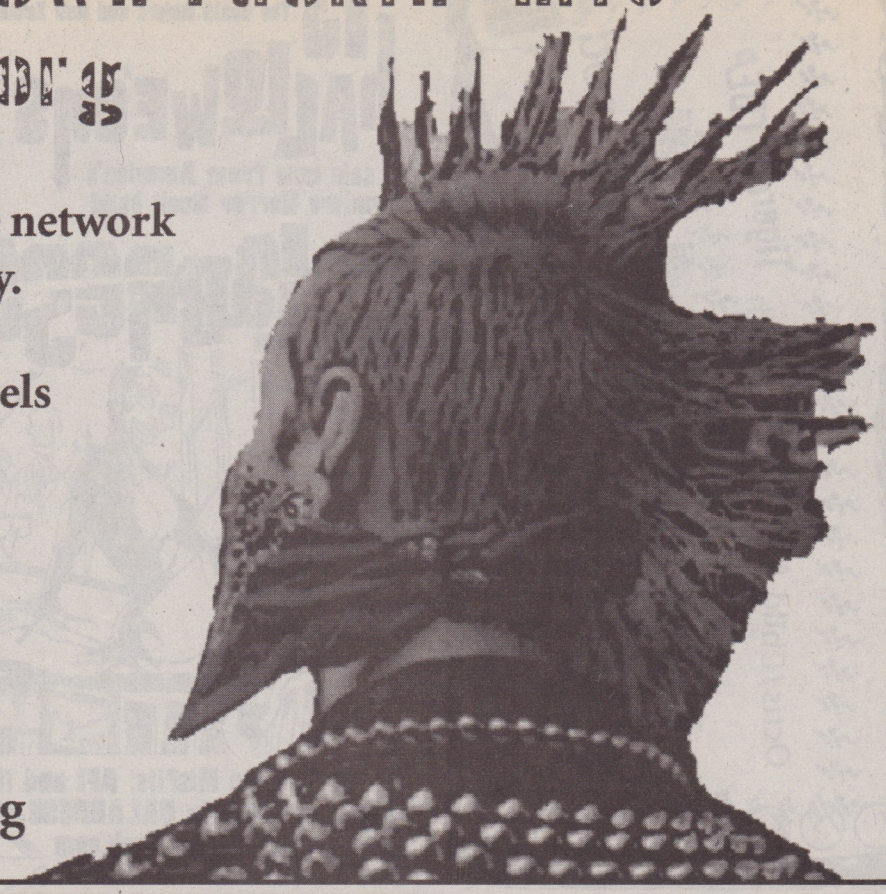

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RECORDS

Send 2 copies of vinyl or CD-only releases (if on both formats, please send the *vinyl*) to **MRR, PO Box 460760, SF, CA 94146, USA**. We will review everything that falls within our area of coverage: punk, garage, hardcore—no major labels or labels distributed by major-affiliated distros. Please include postpaid price and contact information. Let us know where your band is from! *No reviews of test pressings or promo CDs without final artwork.* Send demo tapes and CD-R-only releases to Erin Yanke, PO Box 1113, Portland, OR 97207.

Reviewers: (TB) Tim Brooks, (MC) Mitch Cardwell, (RC) Rob Coons, (CC) Carl Cordova, (PC) Paul Curran, (AD) Andy Darling, (DD) Dr. Dante, (SD) Sean Dougan, (JF) Jonathan Floyd, (JH) Jeff Heermann, (VH) Vince Horner, (LG) Layla Gibbon, (CS) Chris Hubbard, (KK) Kenny Kaos, (CK) Carolyn Keddy, (RK) Ramsey Kanaan, (WK) Will Kinser, (WL) Will Weber Kneitel (formerly Will Risk), (EL) Elliott Lange, (RL) Ray Lujan, (HM) Hal MacLean, (AM) Allan McNaughton, (GN) Golnar Nikpour, (BR) Bruce Roehrs, (KS) Ken Sanderson, (MS) Martin Sorrondeguy, (SS) Steve Spinali, (BS) Brian Stern, (RW) Ryan Wells, (SW) Shane White.

013 – "Takaisin Todellisuuteen" LP

Very, very, very rare Finnish punker LP, a want-list staple for years. Those old copies are gonna be worth, like, a buck now, right? Considering that this thing originally came out in 1983, it is a little surprising that the dominant influence is super-catchy buzzsaw pop *a la* BUZZCOCKS or 999, rather than the then-dominant Rock-O-Rama shout-alongs. Sort of like if the first SONICS LP came out in 1970 or something. All the lyrics are in Finnish, which is somewhat of a barrier to pure pop enjoyment, since lyrics count towards your final score, so…I guess I'm learning Finnish. Then, Basque. (RW)
(Assel, Groner Landstr. 48, 37081 Gottingen, GERMANY)

ABDUKTIO – "Tuli Kulje Kanssani" CD

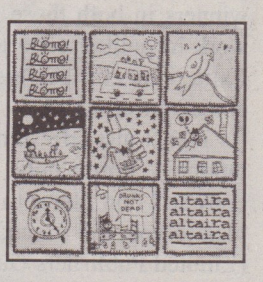
Ferocious, metallic-tinged Finn-core harking back to the late 90s when bands like the REFUSED and RAISED FIST ruled the dancefloor. Intricate melodies, glass-gargling vocals, and windmill inducing riffage make for a storming disc. If this stuff isn't done well it stinks. This band, however, fucking *rips*. Love it. (TB)
(Fullsteam, PO Box 206, 00101 Helsinki, FINLAND)

ALLEGIANCE – "Overlooked" CD

Straightedge bands have never been one of the Bay Area's stronger points in hardcore music. But ALLEGIANCE has put out a solid full-length that truly holds up to the scrutiny. Listening to the first track "1000 Words," I swear I thought I was listening to some unreleased STRIFE song. The slightly overproduced guitar crunch, musical breakdowns, and shouted backing vocals were all in place. But in all honesty, ALLEGIANCE takes this style and makes a great record with it. Fast and aggressive tunes that are relatively short and varied enough to keep things interesting. Quality XXX hardcore for the masses. (RC)
(Rivalry, www.rivalryrecords.com)

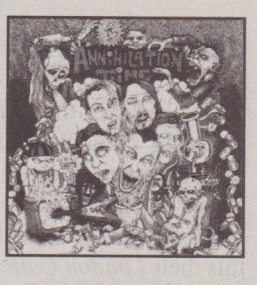
ALTAIRA / BLOTTO – split EP

Days get a little brighter here when you see that you have a Snuffy Smile release to review. What we get is BLOTTO from the Japan and San Diego, California's own ALTAIRA. The BLOTTO side is some serious late 80s/early 90s UK-sounding melodic punk similar to SNUFF/LEATHERFACE. The songs on this release might be the best yet from this band. ALTAIRA has a couple Floridians in the band and sort of has the No Idea/Newest Industry melodic thing going. It's good stuff, but I wish the songs were a touch faster. Unfortunately, I hear that this was ALTAIRA's swan song. This record is one great release. (JF)
(Snuffy Smile, 4-1-16-201 Daita, Satagaya-Ku, Tokyo 155-0033, JAPAN)



ANOTHER OPPRESSIVE SYSTEM – "2000-2004" CD

Burly 20-track discography from four split 7"'s and a self-titled 7" EP from Connecticut's AOS, who delivers rampaging, dual-vocal, EXTREME NOISE TERROR/DISRUPT style ball-of-distortion stenchcore with metallic heft, rock flourishes, and overdrive speed, fueled by snapping, tight drumming. Progressively gnarly and gnarlier vocals spew lyrics that alternate between the typical 80s Mad Max armageddon scenarios and more on-the-point-takes, aiming at the first fours years of the Bush Administration, poverty, drugs, and domestic abuse. Powerful. (KS)
(Profane Existence, PO Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.profaneexistence.com)



ANNIHILATION TIME – "II" CD

Well, ANNIHILATION TIME has completely abandoned the SST aesthetic that dominated their first LP. They've gone from featuring bleak, austere Raymond Pettibon art to having a goofy, multi-colored, and drug-addled cartoon on this, their second full-length. This full-length is also the first to feature their not-that-new-anymore singer Jimmy, and

almost abandons the FLAG/BL'AST influence musically as well. I could give this CD two different reviews. On the one hand, their art is stupid, the lyrics are probably not much better, their senses of humor are uh...not mine...and they've moved away from rockin' hardcore towards semi-ironic THIN LIZZY worship. On the other hand, there are some really fucking good and memorable songs on here that retain the energy and aggression of hardcore punk. I don't know, it's good, but I became punk to get away from moronic dudes calling each other fags. Whatever. (GN)
(Manic Ride, PO Box 42593, Philadelphia PA 19101)

APE CITY R&B – "She's Candy Coated / Oh Lil' Girl"

While some may be put off at yet another record raising the "Low Budget" and "Lo-Fi" banners (with "Low Brow" thrown in for good measure) as well as the guitar/drums duo shtick, this is one of the winners in both those sweepstakes. Good work in pulling off a tough bifecta, boys. Extra points for perversely not putting any contact information on the record or sleeve (or is that just refreshingly realistic expectations?). Fortunately, they sent an extra copy so I don't have to hunt for one. Good luck to you, my friend. (DD)
(Limited Publishers Guild)

ARGIES – "Al Limite De Las Utopias" CD

I believe the ARGIES have been pumping out politically-charged anthems in Argentina for almost two decades. They've oft been compared to the CLASH, and that's pretty apt. I dunno if I would call this their *London Calling* (I really liked the *Give 'Em Enough Rope* of their earlier efforts), but certainly, this is their most stylistically-varied long-player to date. There's still lots of punk and snarl, but lots of reggae, and barbed pop, including the TALKING HEADS' "Psycho Killer." Being on a German label, the lyrics are thoughtfully printed in Spanish (in which they're sung) and German...not English though, I'm afraid. (RK)
(Fire and Flames, www.fireandflames.com)

ASSHOLE PARADE – "Say Goodbye" CDEP

15 songs, 12 minutes—blink and it's over. What we have here are some late-90s "lost" recordings by one of the seminal 90s hardcore bands. Fast as fuck blast-beats tempered by the odd moment to catch your breath—as fast as SPAZZ, as incendiary as CITIZENS ARREST. A welcome dip into the vaults for any thrash-head. (TB)
(No Idea, PO Box 14636, Gainesville, FL 32604)

AUTISTIC YOUTH – "Banned from the Roseland" EP

I was expecting a tongue-in-cheek pisstake of youth crew HC but got some fairly straightforward up-tempo punk instead. AUTISTIC YOUTH appears to be a group of Northwestern young guns with bad reps and worse attitudes. They've set their bullet belt, back-alley drinking ways to a spiky yet melodic soundtrack. It's also immediately clear that AUTISTIC YOUTH is the kind of band that could worm its way onto any bill, be it a hardcore show or a pop punk show, and not seem out of place. If don't already love a Portland, OR band well versed in the ways of 80s punk, you might wanna give these guys a shot. If you already have that position filled, well, stick with what you know. (MC)
(Blind Spot, PMB 697, 3534 SE 52nd Ave., Portland, OR 97206)

THE BADAMPS – "Molotov Milkshake" CD

The BADAMPS deliver solid pop punk with near-flawless execution and high quality production. They either sound like the QUEERS or SCREECHING WEASEL depending on the song. Quality pop punk. (HM)
(Black Market, PO Box 78046, Vancouver, BC V5N 5W1, CANADA, www.blackmarketrecords.org)

BAD EATING HABITS / REASON OF INSANITY – split EP

Florida's BAD EATING HABITS churns six tracks of the same barebones, raw, primitive basement thrash that you know, you love, and you're probably not interested in if you live outside 300 miles of the band's immediate radius. Not bad or anything, it's just that without a personal connection to the band there's nothing to differentiate them from the hordes of bands that sounded the same before, after, and concurrently with this. Their immediate local scene should be jazzed on the fun chaos thrash attack and the ability to bring it home with them! Texas's REASON OF INSANITY delivers solid, straight-ahead, ECONOCHRIST-style hardcore with the same kind of gruff vocals and intricate bass lines. Cool cover art featuring the Cream of Wheat guy holding W's head on a plate; the back cover is even better. Lyrics omitted in favor of a large fold-out band photo collage. (KS)
($3 ppd: Psychowolf, 411 1/2 Lindale, Houston, TX 77022)

BALLAST – "Sound Asleep" LP

Excellent, punchy, quick, and catchy melodic hardcore from Montreal, with alternating sung and shouted male/female vocals over the same kind of low-end, over-arching dark melody of TRAGEDY, but delivered with a punkier, more drum-driven attack at a faster pace, and in a much more roughhewn mix. Ten songs of longer compositions that refreshingly switch things up between alternating ferocious attacks and slower sung anthems, often in the same song. Lyrics champion the daily struggle to remain independent and free. The only thing that's close to a "sleeper" here is largely yawn inducing artwork packaging an otherwise great LP. (KS)
(Profane Existence, PO Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408, www.profaneexistence.com)

BANANE METALIK – "Sex, Blood, and Gore 'n' Roll" CD

French horror/splatter rock, I 'spose. I'm guessing their name in English would be METAL BANANA. They mix lots of gory artwork with the lads with chainsaws and lots of blood and bodyparts, with some driving rock 'n' roll, with a slight rockabilly feel (largely due to the stand-up bass, I'm guessing). All sung in French, which makes it sound a little more angry/creepy than it probably is. But fans of the CRAMPS/METEORS and even the MISFITS might dig this. (RK)
(Killer Bananas)

BBQ – "Take a Message" EP

While so many of these one-man band folks rely solely on novelty to get your attention, BBQ takes the high road with top-notch songs that you can't help but shake your ass to. This telephone-themed EP was released quite a few months back and I've long since fully ingested its contents. Three perrrfect stompers that bring to mind as many of MARK SULTAN's

previous combos as they do bona fide malt-shop/sock-hop classics. Everything he's associated with is pure gold and this EP (presumably long gone) is no exception. *Do* check out the recent LPs as well! (MC)
(Goodbye Boozy, Via Villa Pompetti, 147 – 64020 S. Nicolo A. T. Teramo, ITALY)

BLUTTAT – "Liberte" LP

Spiky German anarcho punk from 1981. Pretty raging stuff for its time. I'd never heard this record although I'd seen the band name around. The overall sound is pretty fast and grinding, with the shouted vocals shared between a Damen and a Herren, but some songs break into a slower, more experimental groove, as was common for the time. If you're a fan of this stuff, or a completist of this era, this is something to look into, but I wouldn't necessarily pick this over a new record by a current band. (AM)
(Assel, Groner Landstr. 48, 37081 Gottingen, GERMANY, assel-records@web.de)

BLUTTAT – "Nkululeko" LP

I have been getting into a lot of old German punk lately. I know some people bag on it, but you can't really argue with greats like VORKRIEGSJUGEND, MALINHEADS, SLIME, INFERNO, RAZZIA, etc. BLUTTAT is a relatively obscure early-80s band from Germany and is a bit different from the melodic hardcore that Germany is most well known for. They played aggressive anarcho hardcore, which predominantly featured a female singer who sounds surprisingly modern. I had never heard this, their second LP, before, but it is great—fast, angry, and punk as fuck. Actually, some of the male/female vocal trade-offs reminded me of a more UK82 style, and even wound up calling to mind recent greats CALL THE POLICE. Like all of the other recent Assel reissues, this looks fuckin' great—the original artwork is all reproduced, right down to the huge foldout poster. A well done reissue for fans of German punk—pick it up if you've got a few extra bucks burning a hole in your pocket this month. (GN)
(Assel, Groner Landstr, 48 37081, Göttingen, GERMANY)

BOXED IN – "Distance" EP

Emerging through the shit-filled cesspool better known as contemporary punk, BOXED IN offers another great, full-throttle 80s style hardcore punk EP, upping the ante this time around with more maniacal musical precision, added overall intensity, and a stronger/more throaty vocal delivery than on previous releases. This EP fucking rips. (BS)
(Heart First, www.heartfirst.net)

BRODY'S MILITIA – "The Appalachian Twelve-Gauge Massacre" CD

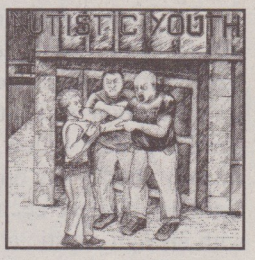
The Sound Pollution catalog goes impressively full circle in one band: *War In My Head*-era INTENSE DEGREE styled pneumatic drill thrash cracked over UNCURBED-style rock breaks and slow downs, with distorted dual vocals and a hint of Swede-styled KRIGSHOT/3-WAY CUM hyper-manic dis-guitar riffage, with the tight blasting delivery of the best of them. Swaggering, refreshingly pissed-off, point blank, and boozy lyrics take aim on yuppies, scenesters, politics, more scenesters, Armageddon, Christian punk, oh and scenesters again—which I'm pretty much right behind, but as a son of the (deep) south, I'm totally lost on lyrical and artistic identity with fucked up rednecks! Oh and the party tune—"I like the way those jeans fit your ass so tight/I hope we'll be together at the end of the night"—I listen to VAN HALEN records for that! At least they're honest. Play best at maximum friggin' volume! (KS)
(Sound Pollution, PO Box 17742, Covington, KY 41017, www.sound-pollution.com)

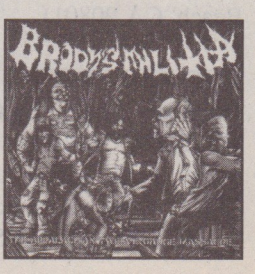
CANONBALL / THIS MEANS WAR – split EP

CANONBALL kicks down a bunch of "comedy-core" tracks. NYC inspired HC with "fun" lyrics, kinda like a less inspired PISSED HAPPY CHILDREN or CRUCIAL YOUTH (without the SE shtick). THIS MEANS WAR is way tougher and way more serious; I'm still hearing the NYC vibe. Not bad, but this won't be hitting the turntable again anytime soon. (TB)
(no address)

CARRY ON – "It's All Our Blood" CD

CARRY ON is one of the *very few* modern youth crew bands that have held up over the years. This CD combines *The Line is Drawn* and *Roll with the Punches* EPs, as well as the track from the *Memories of Tomorrow* comp. Both EPs are great for different reasons, but *The Line is Drawn* EP has California hardcore written all over it, and is my personal favorite. It reminds of a time in the late 90s when all the bands in Southern California played alongside each other, before the "thrash revival" scene deemed CARRY ON an apolitical jock band and forced Californians to take sides. Then again, had this *not* happened, CARRY ON might not have written the *Roll with the Punches* EP, which not only started looking to the East Coast for it's major influences, but turned out to be as well-written a straight edge hardcore record as the first LIFES HALT 7". For all you straight edge punkers that slept on this band the first time around, now is your chance to redeem yourself. Essential listening. (CC)
(Youngblood, PO Box 236, Ephrata, PA 17522, www.youngblood-records.com)





CELA NR 3 – "Dedykacja Dla Kurdupla" 2xCD

I'm in the dark on this hefty double pack as there's not a lick of English to be found on the packaging. This appears to be a complete discography of a Polish band that were around from '86-'90. As with a lot of early European punk its pretty rudimentary going from sparse '77-style gear to some of the lighter UK anarcho punk (POLITICAL ASYLUM, FLOWERS IN THE DUSTBIN). Some seems to be bona fide recordings whilst others appear to be demos. I found it all to be a little basic and one dimensional and 48 tracks is too much of any band!! For Eastern European completists only. (TB)
(pasazer@poczta.onet.pl)

CHAIN BREAKER – EP

Six tracks of one-dimensional thrashing with the vocals and instrumentation largely drilling—single line—to the same abrasive point and attack. Vocals follow guitars, guitars follow drums, bass occasionally noodles out on a suspect limb. The German sing–screeching is hammered with enough caustic abrasiveness to reach a similar place to the overdrive of SF Bay locals SCURVY DOGS, or the PLAGUE's second-hand lifting of the caustic, NEGATIVE APPROACH-style attack. Excellent multi-color silk-screened sleeve. (KS)
(Vendetta, Gleimstrasse 17 10437 Berlin, GERMANY, www.vendettarecords.de)

CIRIL / VAGINALS – split EP

Anarcho alert! Anarcho alert! Long Beach is back again with this split by CIRIL/VAGINALS. Yup, picking up in the spirit of MEDIA CHILDREN, AUTONOMY and countless anarcho picnics, these two bands deliver some rudimentary punk rock anthems that young mohicans can drink, dance, and hate the cops too. In fact I wouldn't be surprised if both bands have played a couple of punk picnics or at least one of those NAKED AGGRESSION reunion shows. (JF)
(Desnotic Records, PO Box 832, Long Beach, CA 90801)

THE CULPRITS – "Thursday-Night Hardcore / Drive by the Gutter"

The CULPRITS deliver some high-octane punk with a touch of hard rock. Their sound is much like the faster CANDY SNATCHERS tunes, and in some ways they remind me of a slower version of their Portland neighbors, LOPEZ. The creepy drummer on the cover gives these guys the edge they'll need to stand out within the derelict Blind Spot Records catalog. Good shit. (HM)
(Blind Spot, PMB 697, 3534 SE 52nd Ave., Portland OR 97206, www.blindspotrecs.com)

DAIKAIJU – CD

Promo sticker on the jewel case proclaims "a gigantic, maniacal chimera of *Pulp Fiction*, 70s prog and Joe Meek, DAIKAIJU is equally informed by MAN…OR ASTROMAN?, KING CRIMSON, and CHROME." Doubtless an accurate rendering of DAIKAIJU's mission statement but the rather tame production keeps this from being on a level with MAN…OR ASTROMAN?, CHROME, or even KING CRIMSON (hey, if you find their first album in the dollar bin, it's worth it for "21st Century Schizoid Man" alone). Whether this is a mission worth undertaking is a matter of individual judgment. (DD)
(Reptile, www.daikaiju.com)

THE DANGER MEN – "Summer of Danger" CD

This is the debut of the heavily rumored "Danger-Phonic" sound. It doesn't do a lot for me. The DANGER MEN play some riff heavy rock and roll, but their LOU REED-esque lead vocals don't work with half the songs. These "suave" vocals tend to detract from the energy of the songs. I guess the mid-tempo pace of some of their tunes zaps their energy, and their fuzzy guitars and fuzz bass wipe out a lot of dynamics. I'm not impressed. (HM)
(Wild Eagle, PO Box 12638, George St., Brisbane 4003, Queensland, AUSTRALIA, www.wildeaglerecords.com)

DEAN DIRG – "The Chimpanzee" EP

Without a doubt, one of the best records to come in this month. Exploding with manic energy, Germany's DEAN DIRG push it through with six tracks of relentlessly fast, totally pissed, no-nonsense punk rock. As they've already shown us with two killer LPs and a split with HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE, DEAN DIRG brings together all of the best elements of 80s hardcore and 90s garage, and cuts out all of the shit in between. With songs like "I Don't Like Your Band" and "Mum I Hate Your Kids," what more could you want? (VH)
(Ken Rock, www.ken-rock.com)

DEAR DIARY – "How to Become a Ghost" CD

German emo punk here with all the right breaks and guitar chops. Some of the tracks have a bit of an ARCHERS OF LOAF feel but other tracks slip into a generic radio ready sound *a la* THURSDAY and the USED. Still decent just a bit tired genre-wise. (RL)
(Bastardized, PO Box 1111, 56238 Selters, GERMANY, www.deardiary.de)

DEATHCYCLE / THE SOLIDARITY PACT – split EP

This split EP features two of Long Island's newer hardcore punk bands. DEATHCYCLE, on the A-side, opens with a desperate, heavy-as-fuck tune along the lines of THOUGHTCRIME (of whom they claim an ex-member or two) or STATE OF FEAR. Though the lyrics deal with the fucked-up mess of our modern world, there is an underlying message of resistance. Their second track, a mid-tempo song in the "NYHC" style of bands like BURN, offers a more desolate view of humanity ("Look at our species a human wrecking ball/That respects nothing and devours all") and our inevitable downfall. On the flip, the SOLIDARITY PACT contributes three songs in a more melodic hardcore style, and I can discern a little youth crew influence as well. The upbeat music is quite a contrast to DEATHCYCLE, though both bands find some common ground in their lyrics. (CS)
(Rok Lok, 153 East 17th St., Huntington Station, NY 11746, www.roklokrecords.com)

DECREPIT – CD

A discography of raging crust from these angry Seattle lads. You know what color their clothes are and you know they love the PBR poster they posed in front of for their band photo. Their strongest assets are the raging vocals, which relentlessly seethe with venom from note one, and are often layered with multiple, different screams—that's no small thing since they're all apparently from the same guy. He's got a few distinct styles, from the favored scream, to some death metal

howls, to even a FUCKFACE-type yelp. Whatever the delivery, the musical content is always equally frothing at the mouth. This contains their *Tired of Licking Blood from a Spoon* LP—originally released on Profane Existence—as well as a self-titled EP and splits with SCATHED, PHALANX, and CEPHLATRIPE. Quality non-stop face-rippage here for the most ardent beer-soaked crusties. (EL)
(Czerwony Diabelek, c/o Adam, PO Box 13, 41400 Myslowice, POLAND, rdevil@poczta.onet.pl, www.redevilrec.com)

LA DESCENTE DU COUDE – "L'indecence du Coup" CD

Inside some exquisite, intricate packaging, you'll find thirteen tracks of quirky, French-Canadian, off-kilter punk. The Quebec MINUTEMEN? Or should that be the Gallic GIANT HAYSTACKS. There is a lot of melody and pop with the rhythms, which showcases a talented female chanteuse. Excellent stuff. (RK)
(Dare To Care, www.daretocarerecords.com)

DEXTER DANGER – "Hellafornia" CD

Never heard of these folks before, but they are local—all four of 'em. They turn in thirteen tracks of that smooth, melodic hardcore style popularized by the likes of LAGWAGON and NO USE FOR A NAME, which they've prettied up even further for alt-rock airplay, complete with obligatory acoustic ballad. They do it well though, and, given that I like this sort of poppy stuff, it had the ol' aged toes tapping in no time. (RK)
(Orange Peal, www.orangepeal.com)

DISRESPECT – "Justice in a Bag" CD

Is Minneapolis twinned with Hackney in East London? Seems they have a history of churning out bands that sound like bands I saw in some god-awful squat in London in the early 90s. DISRESPECT ignores the fact that they have ripped off the DISCHARGE logo and go straight for the gluebag with their one-dimensional ONE WAY SYSTEM meets CIVILISED SOCIETY racket (I think I get the CIV's reference 'cos of the male/female twin vocals). In fact, the more obscure reference would be the SUICIDAL SUPERMARKET TROLLEYS, nothing groundbreaking but probably a right laugh when you're pissed. (TB)
(Profane Existence, PO Box 8722, Minneapolis, MN 55408)

THE DUANE PETERS GUNFIGHT – CD

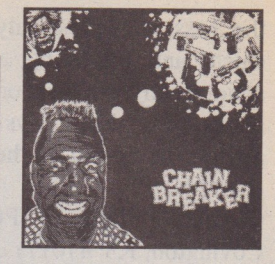
Boy, that old dude still has lots of energy. Taking a little time away from his other two bands (US BOMBS and DIE HUNNS), the grizzled pro skater has managed to cook up this kick-ass collection of rawk 'n' roll. Musically, it's top notch, later SOCIAL DISTORTION mixed with HEARTBREAKERS, with that distinctive growling sore throat. It's more LAZY COWGIRLS than RANCID, but that's absolutely fine with me. The old man still rocks. Hard. His band mates look pretty long in the tooth too! (RK)
(Disaster, www.disasterrecords.com)

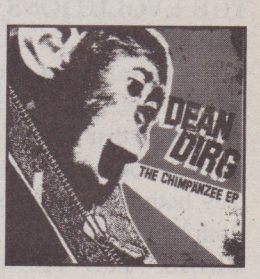
DUE TOMORROW / TRASH TRAIN – split LP

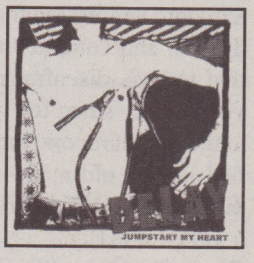
It seems like we're back to the mid-80s again—people getting bored with the generic punk/hardcore sound and fucking with the formula. I, for one, am all for it. DUE TOMORROW (or is it *ONE* TOMORROW? I can hardly read it) has certainly done their history homework, blasting out some mutated old school tough sounding hardcore punk mixed up with tempo changes and jazzy bits. I'm so glad we're out of the emo (and screamo for that matter) period—emo was perfect for boring suburban middle class white kids. This is where it's at, though—it sounds like it was recorded in a run-down squat in a shit-hole of a neighborhood while dirty teenagers run around all drunk and high on solvents doing it to each other in their bottoms. If you remember the SEWER ZOMBIES and the DISAPPOINTMENTS, you'll know where these guys are coming from—also the OFFENDERS spring to mind, and even a dab of the MINUTEMEN. Great stuff. TRASH TRAIN is (as their name suggests) a little trashier. They keep the hectic eclectic theme going and mix in a reggae bit, swamp rock, and harmonicas, among other things. Good, but DUE TOMORROW takes the biscuit. I was hoping these bands were from some dump in Michigan or Wisconsin or somewhere but apparently they're from Brooklyn. Anyway, this shit is the future, punk rock has become stale, and I'm with the kids! The revolution starts here, now fly my little monkeys—bring me the heads of Fat Mike and Felix Von Havoc. (AD)
(no address)

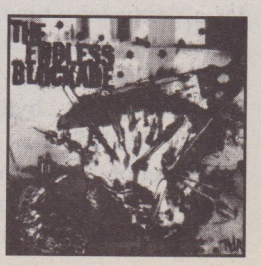
THE ENDLESS BLOCKADE – "Turning Illness into a Weapon" CD

Never even heard of these guys before and I am just floored at how good this record is. Absolutely punishing, heavy grind that switches effortlessly between slow and fast parts. Fuck, where do people find bands like this…ah yes: Canada. The only band I can think of that sounds even remotely similar is the great IRON LUNG and even that's a stretch—they're both highly original bands with a unique outsider take on the grind thing, making weird, creepy rhythms that just explode into furious blasting and screaming. ENDLESS BLOCKADE is even heavier though, reminding me also a bit of CATHETER in the slower parts, just without the stoner rock SABBATH parts. The dual trade-off vocals are deadly,









the bass is oppressively heavy, the riffs catchy and interesting, and the drumming solid. Really can't say enough good things about 'em—these guys are essential for anyone interested in heavier/grind stuff. (EL)
(Sound Pollution, PO Box 17742, Covington, KY 41017)

THE EVOLUTIONS / THE FATALS – split EP

I can't think of two better bands to be teamed up with on a 7". Both utilize overblown distortion, screeched out vocals and we-don't-give-a-fuck production, yet they both manage to create catchy songs. Both bands dig up the ghost of the OBLIVIANS and TEENGENERATE and breathe some life into rock and roll. I personally have a thing for JFK songs, so the EVOLUTIONS' "Me & Lee Harvey" makes me very happy. This is fantastic. (CK)
(Kryptonite, 542 S 29th St., Manitowoc, WI 54220)

FALLOUT PROJECT – "Hopes and Ropes" CD

Quebec City's FALLOUT PROJECT dishes out six pounding tracks of heavy hardcore aggression that has the clean production and complex melodic songwriting that today's disenfranchised, middle class youth are sure to love. The kind of anthemic hardcore angst that makes me feel like an old man—"When I was a kid, punk still sounded dangerous. When I was a kid…" (VH)
(Dare To Care, PO Box 463 Station C, Montreal, QC, H2L 4K4, CANADA)

FAT DAY – "Snarl of Pulchritude: Singles 1993-2003" CD

OK, I know that people are really into this band, and I have to hand it to them, there is something compelling about their snotty weirdsterism. They are definitely jokers—their sense of humor reminds me at times of the tongue-in-cheek antics of ANGRY SAMOANS. They've been at it for a pretty long time; this singles comp compiles a decade's worth of stuff. They did split EPs with HARRIET THE SPY and THOMAS JEFFERSON SLAVE APARTMENTS, but don't really sound like either of those bands. They've released records on Load and on HG Fact (?!), but aren't necessarily typical of those labels. I don't think they fit in with one scene—over their career (which includes six or seven EPs and four full-lengths) they've definitely gotten weirder and spazzier, but have retained a punk sensibility that makes them stand out from some of their more pretentious art-label peers. A pretty cool collection, and a good introduction to this compelling (and funny) band. (GN)
(100% Breakfast!, PO Box 381804, Cambridge, MA 02238)

FIGHT AMPUTATION – "Ugly Kids Doing Ugly Things" EP

It's always refreshing to get a band for whom I have a hard time thinking of bands to compare them to. New England's FIGHT AMPUTATION is such a band, though I'll go ahead and ruin that particular by saying that they're the kind of band that the likes of Robotic Empire or Level Plane might be interested in. They have what I'd call a Virginia type sound like maybe PG. 99 or a faster MAJORITY RULES with more straightforward hardcore leanings. They're the type that can be vaguely emo and still hold my attention, incorporating a few URANUS nods here and there. But really, these guys got their own thing going on—all the songs have super-tight arrangements and interesting transitions between parts; there are honest-to-god individual songs here. Definitely looking forward to hearing more. (EL)
(Knife Hits, 77 Haddon Ave., W. Berlin NJ 08091, www.knifehitspunk.com)

FINAL SOLUTIONS – "My Love is Disappointed" EP

Cover drawn by a three-year-old, music played four-year-olds, recorded by a five-year-old. This is punk. Ugly music for ugly people—count me in. Power pop, even mod revival comes to mind, but in a fucked up destroyed way, then there's the art damage to scare off any bubblegum record herder. A POOH STICKS cover which makes this go from brilliant to a downright must. Three tunes that'll make you wanna join a band. (SD)
(Shattered, www.shatteredrecords.net)

THE FIRE STILL BURNS – "Good as New" EP

Members of LIFETIME, ENSIGN, and SCARLET LETTER (I say this because they advertise it clearly on the cover) play pretty typical melodic hardcore here. Not too far off from their previous bands, this could be easily grouped in with STRIKE ANYWHERE, BAD RELIGION, or lesser known DE LA HOYA. Plenty of octave chords and "whoah-oh"s. The playing is tight and all, it's just kind of plain song-wise. (WL)
(Koi, 18600 South Parkview No. 1836, Houston, TX 77084, www.koirecords.com)

THE FOUR SLICKS – "Bye Bye" EP

Rockabilly-influenced garage punk from France? I can appreciate your skepticism, but I'm here to tell you that this is the fucking real deal. Featuring Jon Von of RIP OFFS fame, these guys come out of the gates swinging and don't let up. It's one, two, three, four rockers, one after the other. It's not artsy, it's not pretentious, and it's not dark. No, it's even better than that. It's faster paced, it's catchy, it's fun, and it's rock and roll. For those who enjoy music and don't mind admitting to it. Go out and find yourself a copy. (KK)
(Savage, Farstav. 89 (8 Tr.), 123 34 Farsta, SWEDEN, www.savagemagazine.com)

FRIENDLY – "Dreamers" EP

FRIENDLY has cool, stripped-down tones, with a real raw, off-kilter early-LA-punk-meets-early-80s Polish punk sound with distinct vocals I will attempt to describe by saying they register somewhere between Tony Cadena of ADOLESCENTS and Paul Mahern of ZERO BOYS. Their dissonant guitar sound and nicely executed bass counter melodies make for a solid listen. "Dreamers" and "Lost Cause" are the standout tracks on this EP. Harsh but melodic punk with grit. (BS)
(Friendly, c/o Wil Olsen 1443 Chelmsford St., St. Paul, MN 55108, friendly@slaargh.com)

GENETIC CONTROL – "Brave New World" CD

GENETIC CONTROL's one and only 7" from 1984 is one of Canada's all-time hardcore gems; it's impossible to get but unlike a few of the hardcore holy grails it actually lives up to the hype. This CD is, for the most part, a live show from 1998 when the band briefly reformed. Decent, rough around the edges hardcore with all their "classics," along with a handful of covers. What makes this CD mandatory is all the tracks from the 7" tacked on the end. More in common with US hardcore of

the time (think Midwest classics ARTICLES OF FAITH or ZERO BOYS) than many of the other Canuck bands, every track is a stormer. Unlike the shit bootleg from last year, this is legit and comes with the awesome 7" cover art of a bunch of mohawked marines. Worth it for the last five tracks alone. (TB)
(www.youarethescene.com)

GO IT ALONE – "The Only Blood Between Us" CD

If you are a fan of a lot of the current modern hardcore coming out of the Seattle straight edge scene, then you are going to love Vancouver's GO IT ALONE. Much like their Northwest counterparts, I hear a lot CARRY ON in their sound. But unlike those bands, GO IT ALONE leans a little more to the political side lyrically. This is top-notch stuff. My only complaint is that like most Rivalry Records bands, GO IT ALONE has opted to record with Zach Ohren at Castle Ultimate, which always leaves the drums sounding too digital and sterile for my tastes. (CC)
(www.rivalryrecords.com)

GOVERNMENT WARNING – "No Way Out" EP

GOVERNMENT WARNING's soon-to-be-classic debut EP is already in its second press. This band is from Richmond, VA, and I feel compelled to mention that two members also play in DIRECT CONTROL. While similar to that band, GOVERNMENT WARNING puts more of an emphasis on the catchy riffs and is less aggro. In other words, this is top-notch modern old-school American hardcore not unlike CAREER SUICIDE. (CS)
(No Way, www.deepfrybonanza.com/nowayrecords)

GUERILLA – "A Call to Arms" CD

This band is a schizophrenic listen, but in the best possible way. Super-political left-wing anti-fascists from Germany backed by a mix of LET IT BURN/LIFETIME hardcore, rousing streetpunk, and even a nod to some of the more tuneful UK anarcho bands. I know, it sounds like a muddled mixed bag, but it really works. All the songs are driving, catchy, and actually mean something, standing head and shoulders above half the shite that tries to pass itself off as "punk" these days. Fan-fucking-tastic. Oh, did I forget to mention that the cover looks like an electro-clash record??. (TB)
(Twisted Chords, Reutweg 1A, 76327 Pfinztal, GERMANY)

HANS-A-PLAST – "Rock 'N' Roll Freitag" LP

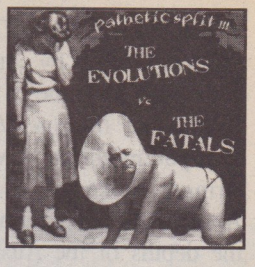
This fuckin' rules. Seriously incredible early German punk, kind of artsy but still punk, like a mixture of KLEENEX and X-RAY SPEX or even ESSENTIAL LOGIC. It's got a definite Rough Trade influence, and my badly translated attempt at understanding the lyrics indicate that they were influenced by DELTA 5/GANG OF FOUR personal-is-political style writing, where imperialism and consumer culture and feminism and the politics of romance collide. There's a song where the lyrics jump from a woman standing plastic bag in hand watching a shopping mall burn, to her gazing into her lover's eyes over a candle lit dinner. Um, obviously I am not entirely sure of the exact meaning because I skipped a lot of school and my German is pathetic, but I like the imagery. It reminds me of GORILLA ANGREB in places, but then there will be total fractured KLEENEX-style vocals. Meaning, it's tuneful and catchy as hell but experimental and full of a million ideas. They use the boy/girl dual vocals in a cool way, kind of like how on that GANG OF FOUR song "Anthrax" two ideas—love and consumerism—are discussed at once by the two voices. Hopefully that makes some kind of sense. Basically, you should stop reading this and get this record because it is awesome. Then, you should start a band of your own that's as adventurous. (LG)
(Re-Force, Wöhlerhof 4 30900 Wedemark, GERMANY, www.re-forcerecords.de)

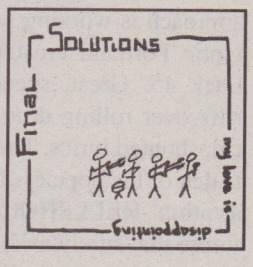
THE HEARTBURNS / FRANKIE THE DAMAGE – split EP

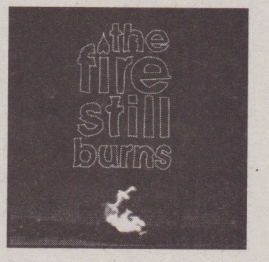
Hold on, you fucks! The HEARTBURNS write "Too Much Drugs, Too Much TV"—is that possible? The HEARTBURNS come blistering out of the gate with psychotic sounds from Hell, Finland. These goddamn punks are harnessed to some high-voltage shit! The guitar assault rips your frigging ears off! The demented vocals might remind you of the great MUD CITY MANGLERS or those esteemed pioneers the LYRES. Excellent punk rock spoken here! Side two of this dangerous little slab features FRANKIE THE DAMAGE. These miscreants start fucking with you right from the get with their theme song, "Frankie." This is some dirty, loud rock 'n' roll! The next tune, "Fuck You," slows down to slog through some heavy sludge steeped in POISON IDEA and TURBONEGRO nastiness. Song three gets in a comfortable rock 'n' roll chug complete with harmonies. Both bands can play several variations of evil punk music. Compare and contrast—you get high quality Finnish punk throughout! (BR)
(Wanton, Keskikatu 3 A 13, FI-45100 Kouvola, FINLAND)

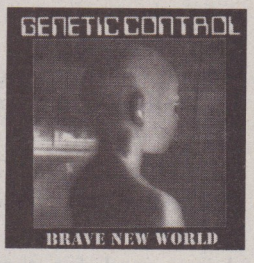
HEKAWIS – "Intellectuals" CD

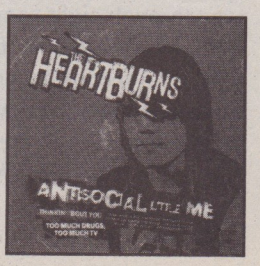
Intellectuals: no, not really. What the HEKAWIS are, without question, is sometimes irreverent, sometimes irrelevant 60s-styley farfisa rock that makes the











BOLIDES or GHOSTS sound like UP WITH PEOPLE by comparison—if you've bothered with some of the more-disposable volumes of *Teenage Shutdown* or *Pebbles,* then you might know what to expect. Bent strings, broken keys, spooky thoughts. Another quavery warning shot fired from the depths of the Australian bush—and a fun listen for errant glue-sniffers. (JH)
(Wild Eagle, PO Box 171 Sherwood, 4075 Queensland, AUSTRALIA, www.thehekawis.com)

HELLSHOCK – "Warlord" EP

Man, I was in such a good mood before playing this record and then bam — life sucks. This grim slab of downer, oppressive doom-crust is sure to ruin your day in ten seconds flat—and I mean that in the best possible way. The twin guitar approach is working well for these apocalyptic Portland crust punks on this two-track 45. Great, speedy thrashing guitar riffs over rolling drums and bleak, political, shouted lyrics. The overall atmosphere is that of the hopeless monochromatic devastation HELLSHOCK envision as the future that surely awaits us at the hands of our leaders. A perfect soundtrack for doomsday. (EL)
(Profane Existence, www.profaneexistence.com)

HIPS – "James Brown" EP

Oh, yes. I love this minimalist punk band. Little name, little songs, little record, and little record insert with little lyrics on it. The only thing done big is the thank you list. It's all so cute. It's a good thing that it is also rockin'. Dirty, punked-out R&B with echoey, shouted vocals. Catchy and trashy. Oh yeah! (CK)
($4 ppd: Going Underground, 1412 17th St No. C, Bakersfield, CA 93301)

HOSTILE TAKEOVER – "Fucking Up and Fallin' Hard" EP

It is always good to see the local bands doing good for themselves. The Bay Area's HOSTILE TAKEOVER blasts their way through eight songs of intense thrashcore on this EP. I think the occasional squealing feedback and random metal guitar lick thrown in only adds to the quality of this record. And the hammering pace of the music is a killer! Another solid release from.... (RC)
(625, www.625thrash.com)

ICKY BOYFRIENDS – "A Love Obscene" 2xCD

Every scene has its local "pariah band"—the group that is so sonically obnoxious and weird that they alternately repulse and attract fans in equal proportions. Most of the time these bands are a purely reactionary conceit leveled against whatever is locally popular, merely a collegiate in-joke, a self-contained anti-fad. The ICKY BOYFRIENDS were for real. They existed in the twilight years of early-to-mid 90s San Francisco, before the dot-com bubble pushed out most of the remaining cultural riff-raff that had been sustained by hippie and punk cultures for 30+ years. The ICKYs were a three-piece, uh, "garage rock" band that employed a treble-first philosophy and a "we'll-play-anywhere" moxie that landed them primo local gigs at places ranging from the Starry Plough (where are the $10 hamburgers?) to the Sixth Street Rendezvous (where are the $10 blowjobs?). The vocals were courtesy Jonathan Swift; adenoidal, harsh and cosmically sarcastic, and he managed to craft lyrics so embarrassingly autobiographical yet universal that the only comparable reference point is pre-whimsy MODERN LOVERS. In spite (?) of the Dave E.-styled vocal attack, the ICKY BOYFRIENDS crafted scads of genuinely catchy (if persistently morbid) songs; "Frank's Mom," "Drug War," and "Rock and Roll Asshole" could form one hell of a mid-afternoon Rock Block. This release brought back fetid memories of their show at the Purple Onion, when my friends begged me to leave halfway through to hit Mr. Bing's, but I'm all "No, these guys sound like the ELECTRIC EELS, don't you think? Reply: *YES*!" This double CD has their *I'm Not Fascinating* LP and all of their 7" singles on disc one, then their *Talking to You Is Just Like Being Dead* posthumous LP plus unreleased stuff on the other. The enclosed booklet, with wince-producing color commentary courtesy all-star drummer Anthony Bedard, is a reason in itself to shell out for this rather than just snagging it from some kraut download site. The best 90s punk reissue I've heard this year. (RW)
(Menlo Park, PO Box 1652 Cooper Station, New York, NY, 10276)

INTELLIGENCE – "Icky Baby" LP

While the INTELLIGENCE remains LARS FINBERG's outlet for the release of his charming and highly catchy songwriting, the addition of a top-notch backing band has really kicked these already-fantastic tunes over into bona fide monsters. The bedroom drum machine vibe of *Boredom and Terror* is replaced here by an absolute powerhouse of a backing band, made up members of FACTUMS and POPULAR SHAPES! A lot of folks like to pull the LE SHOK card with this new-look INTELLIGENCE, which would make sense if they hadn't already far out-shined them. Although the sound and recording (dare I say DIPERS-esque?) is much more abrasive than previous INTELLIGENCE outings, fans of the earlier incarnation will still be taken aback by how great this material is. More importantly, "Icky Baby" will give this band some much-deserved respect in the real rock department. Yes…one of the finest releases of the year. (MC)
(In The Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050)

JUSTICE – "Elephant Skin" LP

Belgium's JUSTICE tore it up at last year's Posi Numbers, so it's no surprise that Lockin Out Records offered to do their full-length (sparing no expense with a full-color gatefold treatment). These five Belgian vegetarians step it up a notch from their debut 7", which was a little more straightforward in comparison. Still, this LP contains their trademark mid-to-late 80s NYHC sound, treading even further into later BAD BRAINS and UNDERDOG territory. A damn good record by a band with an even better live show. (CC)
(www.lockinout.com)

KBH – "Blood Money" CD

Twelve short(ish) blasts of old-style, basic punk. The singer has a bit of the MISFITS inflection in his voice, which certainly goes with the music. The tuneful rock 'n' roll element is accentuated with a stand-up bass on a couple of tracks, too. Lyrically, it covers the gamut of death, nightmares, and the mafia. You get the drift. Self-released, and decent enough, especially if you like...er...the early MISFITS! (RK)
(www.kbhmafia.com)

KIDS LIKE US – "Outta Control" CD

Basic, well-produced hardcore out of Florida that intertwines straight-up fast parts with chunky breakdowns and tough, aggressive vocals. At times they give the songs a rock 'n' roll flair, especially with the southern-fried riffs they throw into the last song "Gator Smash." The artwork is pretty top-notch and I would like to have seen it spread out on an LP as opposed to a fold-out CD cover. Fans of their label mates DONNYBROOK would be wise to check this out. (RC)
(Eulogy, www.eulogyrecordings.com)

KILLER'S KISS – CD

Wow, KING SNAKE ROOST is back on the block! This is a buzzing, howling, makeup-smeared, acid-belching, piss drinking, leg dragging, hairy armpit of a convulsive record. I ordinarily never do this, but if you like the late 80s Aberrant Records stable or fellow Aussies like BEASTS OF BOURBON or BLOODLOSS you will shit several painful bricks over this SF gruppe. 'Nuff said. (RW)
(Hook or Crook, 4219 Tanglewood Trail, Spring Branch, TX 78070)

LACK OF INEREST – "Never Back Down" LP

Damn this fucking rips! 19 songs of ferocious hardcore that utilize a variety of tempos and stop-on-a-dime time changes to keep the listener engaged. At the root of it all is some insanely fast thrashing hardcore (back in the 90s this would be referred to as powerviolence). I am already hearing this being mentioned as one of the best of the year. So don't waste any time and support Bob and Co. with your hard-earned bucks, and pick this up tight away. Angry music for angry people. (RC)
(Deep Six, PO Box 6911, Burbank, CA 91510-6911, www.deepsixrecords.com)

LAZER MOUNTAIN – "Electric Piss" LP

The perfect soundtrack to a $38,000+ student loan for that prestigious yet un-accredited art school; dust off the fixed-gear track bike and clear a space for a chip on your shoulder the size of Rhode Island, cuz this noisy, art-damaged, low-fidelity, moaning mustache/the-delay-pedal-is-on screamo with neon-ink screen printing is gonna rock your socks so fucking hard, your jean cuffs will reach up to your throbbing young plugs and receptacles. Bored the electric piss out of me. (BS)
(Take It Back, www.takitbackrecords.com)

LEMURIA – "The Origamists" EP

Did someone turn the clocks back to 1990? A great 7" from a band that looks like your next-door neighbors with a house full of roommates. A four-songer here with good gal/guy vocals from this trio, who dish out some punky pop with an indie feel. No CD with filler here. Brings back the memories of the first SUPERCHUNK (CHUNK) and DISCOUNT singles to name a few. A great first single from a great new band—that is a must for you 90s indie types. (RL)
($4 ppd: 356 Partridge Ave. Upper, Buffalo, NY 14215, www.allthingsordinary.com)

LION OF JUDAH – "Soul Power" EP

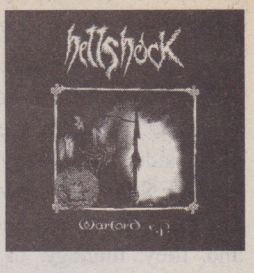
I received a lot of flack when comparing this band's music to BURN when I reviewed their demo a few months back. While the vocals might not sound anything like Chaka, the music has an unmistakable BURN sound in a lot of the bridges and breakdowns. After reading the liner notes, I was surprised that this band opted to record at Inner Ear in Washington DC, rather than go to a studio that would have given them a much heavier sound. Because of this, I have to admit that this record left me a little disappointed (despite creative song writing and a good political aesthetic). I am not sure if it's because the vocals are too loud, or that I just miss the rawness of their first recording, but I have to say that I like the demo better. (CC)
(www.lockinout.com)

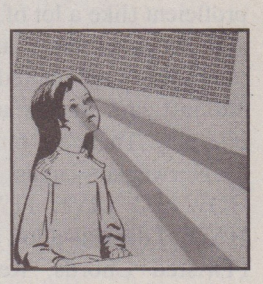
LOSERS BEAT WINNERS – CD

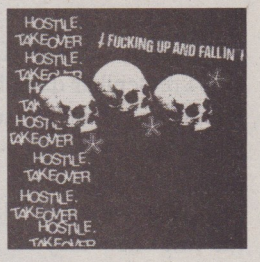
Produced by Bill Stevenson outta the Blasting Room in Colorado, this is well-produced and melodic power-trio punk. Think HÜSKER DÜ *Warehouse*-era stuff, or ARMCHAIR MARTIAN. Solid, though it's a bit same-y, which is probably due to the band knocking these songs out in a studio. Good stuff. (RL)
(Spati, www.losersbeatwinners.com)

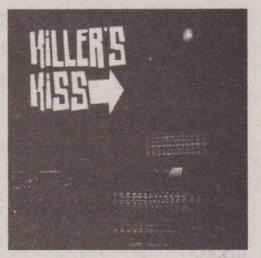
LUTÈCE BORGIÁ / THE JANITORS – split EP

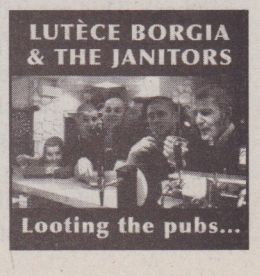
Yes! You lucky skins and punks can raise a beer to this new EP! Benjamin and his Une Vie Pour Rien? record label from Paris are back with more top-shelf skinhead music! This split EP is entitled *Looting the Pubs*. The record begins with a very powerful display of skinhead talent performed by LUTÈCE BORGIÁ! These French punks have high quality vocals, superb guitar playing with melodic hooks, and a solid bass and drum foundation. These two great songs bring to mind the legendary WARRIOR KIDS with a possible nod to the TEMPLARS. Side two of this EP features the first-rate skinhead sounds of the JANITORS. Early this year, Une Vie Pour Rien? vinyl presented the JANITORS debut *The Bloody Belgium* EP. The JANITORS material continues the enthusiastic melodic oi! recording work that the JANITORS do so well. You get one JANITORS' original and a BLITZ cover, both done with conviction. This is an important split EP that skinheads should purchase as soon as possible! (BR)
(Une Vie Pour Rien? Vinyles, BP 80 138, 75 623 Paris cedex 13, FRANCE, www.lutece-borgia.phd.fr)











LÜTTEN – "Delete Elite" LP

Aargh! A one-sided 12"! Do a 7", or a 10", or something—anything—but a one-sided 12". Find another band to go on the other side, even. Anyway, to the music. LÜTTEN throws a few different styles into the mix, from melodic hardcore to emo, and they manage to ride a knife-edge between being super tight and technically proficient (like a lot of German bands) but still keeping things loose enough to be interesting and unpredictable. The songs are fast and there's a lot of two-guitar interplay. There's a hint of a resemblance to Norwegian bands like LIFE... BUT HOW TO LIVE IT? and SO MUCH HATE. I dig this a lot. Five songs. (AM)
(Twisted Chords, Reutweg 1a, 76327 Pfinztal, GERMANY, www.twisted-chords.de)

MANIKIN – "Still" CD

I remember damning this group's first release with faint praise, one of those they-are-good-at-what-they-do-type of reviews that basically meant: boring. Well, this thing is at least half a light year better than the last one—they've got their own ideas now and there is more of a sense of unplanned desperation in their sound. No dummies they, the first track "Face the Wall" is a winner that could've slid right onto a 1981 UK comp next to the PULP demo. A desire to be SPOON is okay by me. The only negative is an unfortunate tendency for wah-wah guitar wankage, but they'll think of some other way to fill up the empty spaces I'm sure. My broker gives this a "buy" rating. (RW)
(Super Secret, PO Box 1585, Austin, TX 78767)

THE MANIKINS – "Highschool Goodboy" 10" EP

When I see a record on the Lollipop label, I confess to getting a little tingly feeling inside. I don't recall ever having been disappointed. More often than not, I've never even heard of the band, but they always deliver. That is definitely the case here. This reminds me very much of early UK new wave/punk rock. It isn't that it sounds like early UK new wave/punk rock; rather, they seem to have the same raw influences. It's rock and roll and it's punk and it's new wave and it's extremely catchy. Still, it retains an edge that most bands just don't have. And another thing...as much as I despise the double 7" format, I love the 10" format. It's just plain cool, that's all. By the way, there are six songs and they all kick some ass. (KK)
(Lollipop, 13 Impasse Monsegur, 130016 Marseille, FRANCE)

MEANWHILE – "Ghostface Democracy" EP

Come on you already know you want this EP without even reading this review. The Swedish D-Beat masters are back at it again, with their DISCHARGE-influenced musical assault. Four ripping songs matched with powerful production just steamroll your eardrums to pieces. A crusher for sure! (RC)
(Fight, Hikivuorenkatu 17 D 36,33710 Tampere, FINLAND)

MENTAL – "Planet Mental" LP

Damn, I have to say this isn't really what I expected. MENTAL takes a step away from straight-up hardcore and tries their hand at a much more progressive, melodic style. Think along the lines of QUICKSAND and the like and you will start to get the picture. Even the cover art of the gatefold is very non-descript and "non-punk." Honestly, I am not really sure what direction the band is going in, but I can say that I am not really into it. It just doesn't have the punch that I look for in a hardcore record. (RC)
(Lockin' Out, 36 Cherokee St., No. 2, Roxbury, MA 02120, www.lockinout.com)

MERDA – "Carlos" CD

This is fast, quirky thrash from Brazil by a three piece band that includes two members of MUKEKA DI RATO. At times their punchy style reminds me of FYP (who they cover), and at other times they just play straight-up fast thrashcore. Check it out! (RC)
(Sound Pollution, PO Box 17742, Covington, KY 41017, www.sound-pollution.com)

MISS ALEX WHITE & THE RED ORCHESTRA – "Don't Turn Me Up" LP

The first song on this record is "Don't Turn Me Up," which makes me laugh because every time I listen to this record I want the vocals turned *way* up. You really need to strain your ears to hear them. Of course, I realize if the vocals were up in the mix they would probably lose their pained, lo-fi charm. MISS ALEX WHITE is a young garage rocker and guitar player with a deep soulful voice who also fronts the HOT MACHINES. The RED ORCHESTRA is Edward on drums and Wesley on guitar, both formerly of the sorely missed CLONE DEFECTS. Together they bring you one of the best records of the year. This is the one that you just need to hear. Trust me. (CK)
(In The Red, PO Box 50777, Los Angeles, CA 90050, www.intheredrecords.com)

THE MONEY – "It's a Shit Business" CD

White boys playing rock 'n' roll, twelve-bar boogie road-house punk. The type of dudes that think dive bars rule. (Dive bars suck, walk in ashtrays full of broken losers with the same hard luck story as ever other broken bum.) Cheap whisky rules, cheap whisky makes me throw up and TED NUGGENT rocked, OK we agree on something. Every song sounds the same and not like the RAMONES. (SD)
(Wild Eagle. PO Box 171, Sherwood QLD 4075, AUSTRALIA, www.wildeaglerecords.com)

MUMMY THE PEEPSHOW – "School Girl Pop" CD

An all gal trio from Japan here playing fun, bubblegum stuff with that amateur-ish charm. No professional chops here! Besides the obligatory early SHONEN KNIFE comparison, this also has that circa 1988 UK fuzz pop feel. Nothing overwhelming, but still decent. (RL)
(Records of the Damned, PO Box 984, Cedar Falls, IA 50613, www.geocities.jp/mummy_triangle)

NEIN / CANTWELL GOMEZ & JORDAN – split EP

Both of these bands are operating in "post-something" territory, combining so many non-specifically punk influences that the sobriquet "indie rock" fits both of them nicely. The NEIN is scatter-shot indie with a dose of anger that reminds of the NW scene circa 1998, the CGJ is in a pure pre-remix state of affairs, sort of like a Factory Records band waiting for their camera time in *Urgh! A Music War*. Sorry folks. (RW)
(Sit-n-Spin, www.sit-n-spinrecords.com)

NEW BLACK – "Time Attack" CD

The NEW BLACK plays arty post punk that rocks. Mostly gal vocals with twisted keyboards and punk guitar make this sound like a blend of PRETTY GIRLS MAKE GRAVES, the EPOXIES, and X GIRL. There's a lot going on here; the RAMONES this ain't. A great release from a band I dig. (RL)
(Thick, www.newblack.net)

THE NEW FLESH – "Parasite!" CD

Droney, long, feedback-laden songs with barely audible vocals. This is the kind of stuff I like to put on when I am working so that I have some noise to drown out the tedium. You can't really sing along to it, but it is fun to try. (CK)
(Maelstrom, 8630-M Guilford Rd No. 246, Columbia, MD 21046)

NOB DYLAN & HIS NOBSOLETES – "Positively 12 Stiff Dylans!"

Reverend Norbert Ugly (onetime *Sick Teen* editor, BORIS THE SPRINKLER frontman, comic book collector, 90s *Maximum Rocknroll* columnist, etc.) and his mates play sped-up hyperactive punk covers of the Bob Dylan canon ("Maggie's Farm," "Highway 61 Revisited," "Subterranean Homesick Blues," you get the picture). Rabid, ribald, and rollicking in the tradition of *Blonde on Blonde* and *Eight-Testicled Pogo Machine.* It looks, sounds, feels and smells precisely as I imagined it would. (JH)
(Alternative Tentacles, PO Box 419092, San Francisco, CA 94141, www.alternativetentacles.com)

NO USE FOR A NAME – "Keep Them Confused" CD

I dunno, this must be their 6th or 7th full length. They helped formulate the classic speedy, smooth, melodic hardcore sound. And *Leche Con Carne* is a bona fide classic. It is as good as that? Of course not. How could it be? Is it good? Of course. It's NO USE FOR A NAME—they helped invent the sound! There are one or two more acoustic-y type ballads, but it's largely classic punk-poppers all the way. You already know whether you dig this, and you're probably right. Me, I'm all for it! (RK)
(Fat Wreck, www.fatwreck.com)

THE NOW – "Fuzztone Fizzadelic" CD

This is the old UK band circa 1977-'79. From the looks of this you'd think this is a release with old recordings, but this is actually a reunion recording from 2004 of their set from 1977. This is still surprisingly great. Great songs with a tad of post punk and those great Brit vocals singing socio-political lyrics. Think early MEKONS and early BUZZCOCKS—early as in 1978. Raw production too! A must for 1977 UK enthusiasts. (RL)
(Damaged Goods, www.the-now.com)

NUDE PUBE BANGLERS – "Sexual Famine" CD

NUDE PUBE BANGLERS fail to live up to their outrageous name by playing run-of-the-mill melodic punk with a hard rock edge. One could stretch and say they were pulling from bands everywhere from DAG NASTY to STOOGES, but no matter how interesting a song starts—be it with a punchy STIFF LITTLE FINGERS-style riff or with a punchy bass line, it always descends into a really mealy TURBONEGRO/OFFSPRING mixture, played solidly but lacking much purpose. (WL)
(Luftwaffel)

OUT COLD – "Planned Accidents" EP

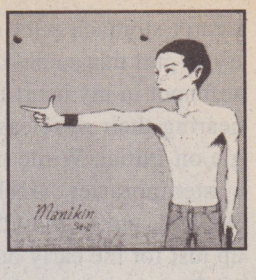
Talk about staying power, these cats were playing straight-up, burly hardcore back in the 90s when everyone wanted to be the NEW BOMB TURKS, and now that all the "thrash revival" bands from 2000 have grown their hair and are playing ironic 70s rock, OUT COLD is *still* playing straight up, burly hardcore. Their LPs always seem a bit same-y, but on the 7" format these guys are incendiary. Like a modern version of NEGATIVE APPROACH, these folks waste most of the opposition. Mandatory. (TB)
(Acme, PO Box 441, Dracut, MA 01826)

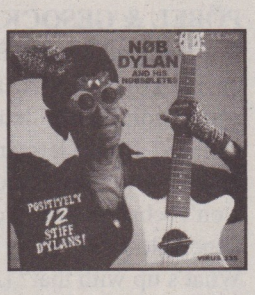
PAUSE / RUIN – Split EP

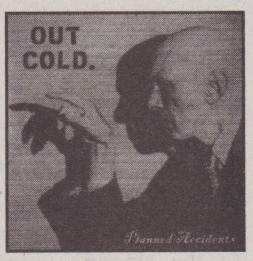
Tampere, Finland's PAUSE's three songs charge with noisy, rockin', riff-driven, and guitar-laden hardcore, mired in a sheen of distortion and featuring hoarse, barking vocals and wild solos. Down-tuned chords lend a bleak feeling to tracks about war, gossip, and breaking free. RUIN, from Glasgow—with members of DISAFFECT/DOOM/SCATHA/DEBRIS—delivers two original tracks and a MAU MAUS cover that sound more stripped-down and a little less oppressively metallic than their debut CD, but are mixed with an absolutely savage attack of the classic UK thrash sound, where the clarity and prominence of the vocals competing over charging thrash give an air of desperation, immediacy, and urgency sadly lost on most modern hardcore. "Bloodline" is worth the price of the record alone, jaw-droppingly sounding like the world is going to end at any second, which gets a huge hats off—that's what the best of hardcore should do. (KS)
(Fight, Hikivuorenkatu 17 D 36, 33710 Tampere, FINLAND, www.kolumbus.fi/fight/home.html)

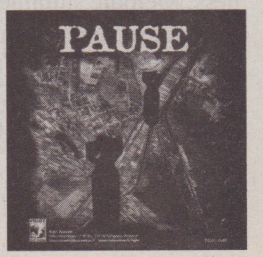
PITBULL – "The Very Worst of..." CD

I forgot how much I like PITBULL. These four Motor City madmen play good early 90s metallic hardcore that is one part CRO MAGS, one part ROLLINS BAND, and four parts Detroit thug.









I can't stomach a lot of bands today that try to pull this sound off, but I have had a soft spot in my heart for these guys since hearing their re-release of their first single on Initial. While not as good as their contemporaries (INTEGRITY, RINGWORM, etc.), this CD is worth picking up just for the early out-of-print material. (CC)
(Disconnected, PO Box 632741, San Diego, CA 92163)

PHOBIA – "Get Up and Kill" LP

Orange County's dinosaurs of grind's latest and arguably best release finally gets the vinyl treatment. As stated before, this record is a great return to form for PHOBIA, with a relentless pace, killer riffs, sick vocals and just massively brutal drumming. Eleven new tracks and six well-recorded live tracks with their previous also-quite-impressive drummer, plus the vinyl version comes with a nice fold-out poster which shall be heading to my wall directly. Unquestionably essential for grind fans. (EL)
(Deep Six, PO Box 6911, Burbank, CA 91510-6911, www.deepsixrecords.com)

PÖBEL & GESOCKS – "Punk" 7"

I'm glad it says "PUNK" in big letters on the cover, I was unsure of what they were going for here. Generic street punk/oi! from Germany. Very catchy and mid-to-up-tempo. It won't change music, it won't change the world, but it's good nonetheless. One song on one side though? What's up with that? (AD)
(Scumfuck Mucke)

PONYS – "Another Wound / Good Good Things"

Weirdo rock 'n' roll. This band will probably already be big by the time you read this and will be on tour with the WHITE STRIPES or something. The PONYS have a great sound that owes a lot to the singer's unique voice, which is beyond David Byrne for whiney strangeness. Melodic shimmering guitars, groovy bass lines, and strained crooning—short and sweet. The flip is bizarre, a DESCENDENTS cover that manages to sound like early JOY DIVISION—there's not many bands that could pull *that* off. (AD)
(Sweet Nothing)

THE POPE – "Jazzman Cometh" CD

Bass and Drum hooliganism from two fellas exorcising BOREDOMS/LIGHTNING BOLT spirits while grinding out chants from the Society of AmRep, HAMMERHEAD/VAZ/distort your vocals and don't print them lyrics school of thought. Drums stumble along proficiently with a slightly off, it's all going to cave in at any second but never does, urgent epileptic snare hand. While the bass cranks out an ear puncturing assault of well conceived "our space ship runs on vegetable grease" riffage, crumbling occasionally into delay drenched/sequential-circuits-style synth sound space drippings. Good stuff. (BS)
(Wäntage, wwww.wantagerecords.com)

THE PRICKS – "Maximum S&M" CD

23 tracks of fast, generic punk 'n' roll, maybe like the HELLACOPTERS or ZEKE or HENRY FIAT'S OPEN SORE. This CD is okay, but it doesn't really have much to set it apart from the crowd, besides maybe the blonde Suicide Girl on the cover. And contrary to the title, there doesn't seem to be any S&M related content at all. For that, can I recommend the SUBMISSIVES LP on Fat Wreck? (AM)
(Rock Star, Kurbrunnerstr. 32-36, 52066 Aachen, GERMANY, www.rockstar-records.de)

EL PUNKEKE & THE ALIENS – "Mundo Rebelion" CD

Said band plays politically-charged punk rock that is bang-your-head-against the-wall boring, reminiscent of no band I would ever listen to, and recorded horribly through some kind of digital set-up. (WL)
(Diskos de la Sangre, 3036 Oakland Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55406, www.primal-tek.org)

RATTUS – "The Poko Recordings 1981-1984" 2xLP

A fantastic reissue of Finnish hardcore legends RATTUS. ZCM really did a great job with this gatefold double LP, bringing us 32 mind–blowing tracks of from RATTUS at their peak—their *Rattus on Rautaa* 12" EP from 1981, the *Rajoitettu Ydinsota* 7" and *WC Rajahtaa* 12" EPs from '82, and the classic *Uskonto on Vaara* 12" from '84. 100% fast, raw, melodic, and ferocious hardcore greatness with not a second of their later crossover nonsense here. This is Finland's best, at their best! (VH)
(ZCM, Am Kesselhaus 9, 79576 Weil am Rhein, GERMANY, www.zmcrecords.com)

READYMEN – "Collection" CD

Neither quite a great hits, nor a discography (as the second LP is missing), this is the almost complete recorded output (less aforementioned second long disc, and earliest demo) comprising their 1st LP, split LP with CHITZ, plus an EP and unreleased track. They mixed up ska, reggae, and punk, with the emphasis on the latter, drawing inspiration more from the SUBHUMANS than OPERATION IVY. They did it pretty well, too. Worth checking out for sure, if that's your thang. Half the band rock on today as the STOCKYARD STOICS. (RK)
(Jump Start, www.jumpstartrecords.com)

THE REAL LOSERS / THE ILLEGAL MOVERS – split EP

Another winner from the REAL LOSERS. The ILLEGAL MOVERS are mighty fine, too, if not quite as brittle and pounding (the REAL LOSERS side of the cover proclaims "Featuring that Hot Dog Beat," and she is indeed quite the percussion stylist), which is a bit more to my personal (poor) taste. Both bands tackle the ZERO'S "Beat Your Heart Out" plus an original and it's all good, wood. (DD)
(Ken, kensplastic@hotmail.com)

REAZIONE – "L'Altra Faccia Della Riviera" 10"

Fuck yes, you skinheads! REAZIONE—those veteran Italian skinheads—have a new product out! On this handsome glossy ten-inch package we celebrate REAZIONE's last ten years. You get some studio material from June to October 1996, as well as some live material from January 1996. You also get a nice cover of a DIOXINA song. The songs were only available on CD prior to this classy reissue by Dirty Punk Records. This is a very welcomed addition to the catalog of one of the most well-respected anti-racist skinhead bands. (BR)
(Dirty Punk, BP 302, 59666 Villeneuve D'Ascq Cedex, FRANCE, www.perso.wanadoo.fr/dirtypunk)

THE REBEL SPELL – "Days of Rage" CD

Ten tracks of politically charged, anthemic punk. Think of a more raw UK SUBS, or ANTI-FLAG, with angry lyrics. Beautifully packaged in the old cut-up style, with lyrics, song explanations, and political manifestos. Unity, anti-capitalism, and rebellion sound pretty appealing on this one. (RK)
(Clandestine DIY Collective, www.therebelspell.com)

REPROACH – "Is What It Is" EP

Belgium's REPROACH continues to tear things apart with these nine new tracks of fast, furious skate-core mayhem. This EP steers away from the blast beat formula than some of their previous releases have had, but don't worry, *Is What It Is* captures as much energy and intensity as they ever have. A high-speed thrash attack that won't disappoint. (VH)
(Deep Six, PO Box 6911, Burbank, CA 91510)

ROCKET 350 – "Built to Last" CD

This is ROCKET 350's third release, and they stay true to their rockabilly roots. They have excellent production with the perfect amount of slap bass, plenty of quality guitar work, and lots of unbridled energy. I dig their heavily-reverbed backing vocals as they accompany a croon-frenzied lead vocal. Well above average. (HM)
(Rock N Roll Purgatory, PO Box 771153, Lakewood, OH 44107, www.rocknrollpurgatory.com, www.rocket350.com)

ROYAL SHAKERS – "Skeleton Trash Parade" CD

Stripped down to the bones trash from Brazil, stinking of a more laid-bare BUTCHERS ORHRESTER, hold on a minute, a Marco Butcher on guitar, um. Skull worshipping primitives, kneeling at the alter of the TRASHMEN, LEGENDARY STARDUST COWBOY and the CRAMPS. What John Spencer never had the balls to do. (SD)
(Burning Kidz, www.burningkidz.com.ar)

SCURVY DOGS – "Relieve Yourself" EP

Damn, the Bay Area scene is so strong right now and Tank Crimes has nailed it this month with the release of the STRUNG UP and SCURVY DOGS EPs. This SCURVY DOGS EP shreds hard from the beginning to end. Solid, fast-as-fuck punk with lots of great guitar licks leading the way. The vocalist sounds incredibly pissed, spewing out hateful, angry lyrics. Worth it for the track "Would You Like Freedom Fries With That?"....a total fucking scorcher! (RC)
(Tank Crimes, PO Box 22641, San Francisco, CA 94122, www.tankcrimes.com)

SEAN – "Singers Ruin Perfectly Good Bands" CD

For a band not to get beat up with a name like that you know they got to be the good kind of a "Boy Named Sue"-type thing. Even before seeing the picture of the burly and bearded dude behind drums, though, you know they got nothing to worry about cuz this bizarre two-piece rips in all the best ways. The real x-factor kicker about SEAN though—far more than the name (which gets explained on their website)—is that all sounds contained herein are made with just drums and *keyboards*, the most blown-out, distorted, noise-ridden keyboards ever. As the album title suggests, this is instrumental, schizophrenic, million-changes-a-minute, drain-bamaged, prog-grind insanity and a definite must for fans of LANA DAGALES, YETI, TARANTULA HAWK, ZOMBI, RUINS, and of course, YES. (EL)
(Ladies Choice, www.ladieschoicerecords.com)

SEX SLAVES – "Bite Your Tongue" CD

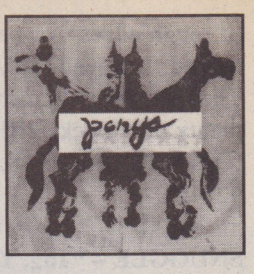
I have to say I was really biased against this record. Stupid name. Hipster/rocker pretty boy trio that obviously fancy themselves. Retarded lyrics about fucking your girlfriend. But, musically, this is pretty damn good. Dirty rock 'n' roll for sure. Think HEARTBREAKERS and DEAD BOYS with a 2005 production. Come to think of it, those bands were retards too. (RK)
(Radical, 77 Bleeker Street, New York, NY 10012)

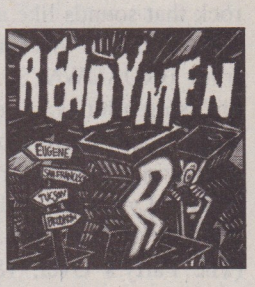
SKELETON – "What Will You Do" EP

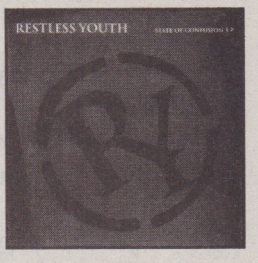
Competent 9-song EP of Scandi-beat hardcore from Canada in the CRUDE SS/SOUND OF DISASTER vein brought to us by the Cries of Pain label. Really, it's hard to go wrong when you are playing straightforward, no frills, Swedish-style hardcore—and this EP is definitely good—but it doesn't necessarily stand out as something I'd go out of my way to recommend. Gruff vocals, black-and-white artwork, and angry lyrics that read like the band took a bit of time on them than just cutting and pasting DISCHARGE lyrics together. Though SKELETON plays energetically, the EP starts to drag a bit by the end—nine songs that don't have much variance may have been a couple too many for a 7". Overall, this is a pretty solid though not extraordinary first effort. (GN)
(Cries of Pain, PO Box 1004, Windsor, CT 06095)

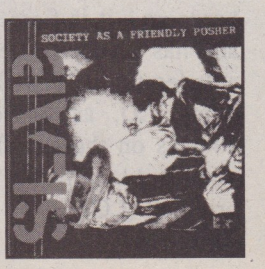
SLAB – "Society is a Friendly Pusher" CD

Twelve tracks of speedy, aggressive, snarling punk rock. I guess this would be called street punk. They certainly have much in common with the SWINGIN UTTERS—lots of rapid anthems, plenty









of rough edges—or perhaps a less sophisticated, stripped down DILLINGER 4. They are, after all, merely a trio, but give it plenty of bollocks. (RK)
(Onset, PO Box 1918, Garden Grove, CA 92842)

SNUGGLE – "Tag, You're It" EP

SNUGGLE plays gritty, melodic punk rock that sounds like a sloppier FIFTEEN with a singer that growls like Brendan from BROADWAYS. Plenty of "whoah-oh" sing-a-longs. Songs are fairly well written, and move along at a good pace. Packaging is silkscreened and photocopied. Lyrics are awkwardly sentimental and emo. (WL)
(The Party's Over, 1821 E. Howell St., Seattle, WA 98122)

SPRING OF RAGE – "The Glory of Nothing" CD

This CD starts off with a long, arpeggiated, melancholy (read: emo) guitar part and gives way to melodic hardcore, and by that I mean AFI or AT THE DRIVE IN or something, not ASTA KASK. Too bad. Weird, terrible cartoon art and embarrassing lyrics pretty much seal the deal. (GN)
(Goodwill, www.goodwillrecords.com)

THE STIMULATORS – "Loud Fast Rules" EP

What can I say. Although I am pretty sure this is a boot, it's good to have such a classic piece of NYC hardcore/punk history on vinyl. In case you don't know this features a pre-CRO MAGS, twelve-year old Harley Flanagan on drums. It's apparently a lot more together sounding than their live shows ever were; if you've seen the Glen E. Friedman book *Fuck You Heroes,* you've seen some pretty awesome pix of STIMULATOR-era Harley freaking out in full regalia, mixing studded wristbands with moccasins for a preteen post-apocalyptic Davey Crockett aesthetic. Uh, stylist tips aside, this represents the dawn of NY hardcore—it is fierce and punk as fuck, and has that KBD sensibility. It's available legitimately on the ROIR *NY Thrash* comp CD, as obviously there is no address on the actual record. Or maybe you could pony up $70 and Ebay the original. (LG)
(no address)

STOLEN BIKE CRUSADE – CD

Melodic punk rock here that reminds me of DAG NASTY, with its driving bass and guitar breaks; this also has that early ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT guitar riffing going on. Throw in some screaming vocals to boot, this is punchy and loud stuff that comes on strong and doesn't quit. Oh yeah! (RL)
(American't, www.stolenbikecrusade.com)

STRUNG UP – "Warfucked" EP

Fuck yes!!! STRUNG UP kicks our asses once again with this new five-track EP of fast-and-furious hardcore. Side one opens with "Warfucked," which is an amazing song. Overall, this record rips from beginning to end. If this band ever hits your town they are a must see. This is one of those records that makes me scream: Hardcore Rules! (MS)
(Tank Crimes, PO Box 22840, San Francisco, CA 94122)

THE SULTANAS – "You're the One / Move On Now"

As much of a fan as I am of all the uncompromising garage dumbosity that Boom Boom Records has come to stand for, this new pop sensibility evident in the SULTANAS is equally great, maybe even greater (I'd use "genius" or "brilliant" if they weren't so overflogged). The slightly clearer sound still has plenty of bite, making this the best sounding Boom Boom disc yet. Almost forgot the girl band geek alert: the vocalizing is a trio of swell sounding ladies, s'alright? S'alright. (DD)
(Boom Boom, 9014 13th Ave. SW, Seattle, WA 98106, www.boom_boom.net)

SWELL MAPS – "A Trip to Marineville" LP

This re-release of the SWELL MAPS' debut LP may be the ultimate version of the record. It's been expanded onto two heavy vinyl disks, with a free four-song EP, and outstanding liner notes by Nikki Sudden and Epic Soundtracks. The audio transfer is better than the original record. SWELL MAPS was an early punk-era band with a diverse sound that defies easy categorization. While "E.S. Art" is bouncy, informal punk with a FALL-like looseness, "Another Song" takes a clever riff on the BUZZCOCKS classic, "Time's Up." On the other hand, you'll hear bits of T. REX, VELVET UNDERGROUND, and a core of scratchy, guitar-driven art-punk that's still fresh-sounding today. The four-song bonus EP is mostly post-punky instrumentals. Recommended! (SS)
(Munster, PO Box 18107, Madrid 28080, SPAIN)

SWELL MAPS – "...in Jane from Occupied Europe" 2xLP

Funny how the SWELL MAPS got short shrift from the critics their first time around—they just couldn't stand up to the mighty aesthetic achievements of OUR DAUGHTER'S WEDDING or MY CAPTAINS, I 'spose. This double LP, which can also serve as a handy lid on your missile silo, has their entire 1980 LP, which originally came out on the legendary Rough Trade label, and another LP's worth of extras from what I assume to be a sizeable broom closet full of moldering jamz. The MAPS, you see, never hit the pause button, and they had way more ideas than most of their contemporaries. I personally never tire of their fuzz-guitar drone, their rat-a-tat drumming, their experimental wandering; it's a real tonic on long bus rides. There weren't really any US bands that sounded quite like them at the time, now every other messed-up group is using their blurry blueprint to hang their wares upon. No complaints, better them than DISCHARGE. (RW)
(Munster, PO Box 18107, Madrid 28080, SPAIN)

TEN 33 – "Nightmare on Grace Street" CD

This CD features: angsty personal lyrics about friendships that "never die," chugga chugga guitar parts, ridiculous breakdowns, at least fifty percent gang vocals, art that made me think this was gonna be a rockabilly album, and top billing to Jesus on the thanks list. Pass. (GN)
(Blood and Ink, PO Box 36371, Richmond, VA 23235)

TOAMOL – "Sucked In" 2xEP

Featuring ex-members of KORT PROSESS and ALLTID JAGET, Norwegians TOAMOL deliver eight songs of dark, heavy, metal-infused (*yawn*) hard-

core. They did a great job packaging this double 7", but musically they—to say the least—fall short. Clean, wanky guitar, and gruff, constipated vocals are probably the two things I hate most about today's metal/hardcore crossover scene. Thankfully, this one's limited to 550! (VH)
(Heartfirst, www.heartfirst.net)

TOKYO EYE – "Vindictive" EP

This Swedish band will draw comparisons to first-wave punk bands with girl singers like X-RAY SPEX, etc, because of their aesthetic and production values, but the songs have more in common with 90s Riot Grrrl/DC stuff. I hear elements of BIKINI KILL, HUGGY BEAR, and SLANT 6. Sounds awesome to me, and I look forward to hearing more. (AM)
(Vapen & Godis, Koopmansgatan 2c414 62, Göteborg, SWEDEN, www.vapengodis.com)

TOWERS OPEN FIRE – "Carbon Copy of Yesterday" CD

This CD is kind of hard to put a finger on. It's definitely hardcore, but doesn't immediately remind me of one band or style. That could be a compliment or not depending on the band, but overall this CD has a pretty schizophrenic feel to it. First of all, the recording is weird. The vocals are pretty high in the mix but have a kind of tinny quality, and the cymbals wash over the music too much at times; for a band that has a number of "heavy" parts, the low-end is just not loud enough. The songs, too, are pretty fucking all over the place—there are dual-vocal crusty parts, metal parts, screamo parts, mosh parts, and lots of crazy guitar noodling. Because they keep the pace pretty fast and the vocals angry, they *almost* get away with being such a hodgepodge of a band. Honestly though, this made me crave a cleansing listen to some basic, stoopid, four-four time punk rock. (GN)
(Towers Open Fire, 57 Brenwal Ave, Ewing, NJ 08618, www.hotsouphardcore.com)

UV RAYS – "Rad Reputation" EP

...this New York band sounds like a mixture of ELECTRIC FRANKENSTEIN, the GRABBIES, and the DEAD BOYS with a bit of Greg Lowery's velvety punk rock jism squirted in to hold the whole thing together.....!!!! Four songs total.....sound quality is "med-fi" (medium-fidelity) and the song-crafting is none too good.....so this record will have to wind up in the bin marked "Generic".....Mike Lucas takes a record out of that bin daily and shits on it.....that's the system here at *MRR*.....!!!! The one redeeming point this band has is the fact that some of its members are truly, truly *ugly*!!!!!! These days ugliness wins my heart over!!!!!!!! *SO FUCK YOU!*!!!! (SW)
(Razorblade Music, 931 Krieger Dr, Webster, NY14580, www.razorblademusic.net)

WORLD WAR IX – "Panic Attack" CD

These folks have a pretty good thing going—it's upbeat, poppy, a little BUZZCOCKS-y. The downside is that all the songs basically sound the same. Still, if you're of the opinion that you can't have too much of a good thing, WORLD WAR IX might be for you. Oh yeah, they do a GG ALLIN cover, which is kind of random in this context. (AM)
(Elis Eil, www.eliseil.com)

WRENCHINTHEWORKS – "Prodigal Transmissions" CD

So guess who's number one on the thanks list from a band with lyrics like "Call me out of the darkness and into the light, I am not of my own…Your grace wipes away my tears and with your strength, I can vanquish all my fears"? That's right—the big man himself, the one who forgives you for having such a pathetically shitty band. (EL)
(Redscroll, joshredscroll@hotmail.com)

ZODIAC KILLERS – "Radiation Beach" LP

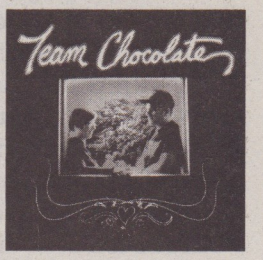
This is the final blow by the ZODIAC KILLERS. Looks like the mighty KILLERS have broken up. Their swan song is a quality release that won't disappoint fans except for the obvious fact that it's their last studio LP. The production isn't as bright as their previous release, but the songs are similar in quality and energy. Makes me wish I hadn't missed their final SF show drinkin' outside in the street. Doh! (HM)
(Rip Off, 581 Maple Ave., San Bruno, CA 94066, www.ripoffrecords.org)

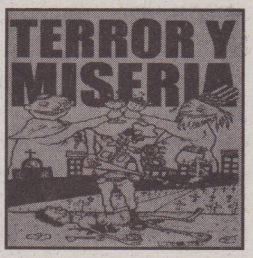
ZOOMEN – "La Menace" 10"

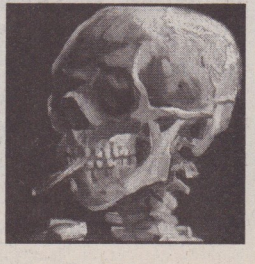
Snotty SoCal beach punk played by a bunch of Frenchies. Like a rougher, tougher STITCHES (without the whine) meets SMOGTOWN, you'd swear this shit was lifted straight off a Hostage records release. I dig. (TB)
(Relax-O-Matic Vibrator, 13 Rue Terrusse, 13005 Marseille, FRANCE)

ZUSCHANDEN – "If You Won't Build It, No Hay Manana" EP

It's pretty cool that all four people in this German band all contribute vocals and that they sing in not only German and English, but also Spanish. Unfortunately, I can't really say they've got an excess of interesting ideas in the song-writing department, with some overwhelmingly unexceptional riffs, boring tempos, and kinda off-putting group vocal choruses. Still though, the little







ZUSCHANDEN trumpet-marching-band mascot thing on the insert is so damn cute it's almost worth getting just for that. (EL)
(La Bruja, apatia_no@gmx.net)

V/A – "A Freeze Frame Burnt in Time" CD

The assertion on the cover that this is an "unreleased classic punk EP collection" is a little misleading. There are no "classic punk EPs" to be found within, just a random bunch of tracks thrown together. The BLITZKRIEG tracks are from their ordinary "comeback" LP in '91, the SKEPTIX stuff is also recent and is so-so metallic GBH at best (check out the recent boot of *So the Youth* for the good stuff). US POLICESTATE is a Spike (BLITZKRIEG/RETCH) side-project doing a decent enough take on DEFIANCE. The only really interesting band here is APA, who does four rousing street-punk numbers that almost save this waste of plastic. (TB)
(Retch, 49 Rose Crescent, Woodvale, Southport, Merseyside, PR8 3RZ, UNITED KINGDOM)

V/A – "Chaos Days" EP

A skinhead comp—why not, being an ex-skin of sorts myself? Well, a mod that went bald to be more precise, but weren't we all. Can't honestly remember a skin comp that lasted more than two songs without the needle being left hooked and sent Torval-and-Deaned across the wax. Four bands—the OPPISITION, ROAD TO RUIN, DOWN AND OUTS (Kop loving Scousers from the holly land of Liverpool FC) and finally the RESIDUALS. The layout of the track listing is so damned bad I can't make out who's bloody who (skinheads, they all look the same). Anyway, it's lasted all the way through taking in some great SLAPSHOT-meets-DROPKICK MURPHYS by the first act; the second bunch not holding my interest more than half a song—plodding basic knuckle dragging oi; third up, raging '82-spirited hardcore, like a more punked-up, intense UNSEEN. The last act, the DOWN AND OUTS (no yank could impersonate a scouse accent), plays fantastic sing-along towerblock anthems, soaking up the sweet vibes of COCK SPARRER with a touch of the BLAGGERS, SNUFF, DEADLINE and BILLY BRAGG—great lyrics to boot, dealing in council estate reality—non-political, no way mate. One of the best skin bands I've heard period. Please, sir, can I have some more? (SD)
(Narayan, 31 Rue Danielle Casanova, 94400 Vitry-Sur-Seine, FRANCE)

V/A – GUNBUNNY / HOLIDAY STABBINGS / DEGÜELLO / SEXDOCIMO CD

A decent enough sampler here of Hanging Out with the Cool Kids bands. GUNNBUNNY has a rock rooted SAINTS meets the DWARVES trashy sound with a lot of bite and distortion, the vocals come off as if they were an afterthought, though they are prevalent in the mix and in-fucking-discernible. I hope they are saying something edgy and uncomfortable like what reviewers can do with a rolled up *MRR*, but shit howdy, we'll never know. HOLIDAY STABBINGS peel the paint with *My War* side two repetitive sludge, and shrieks of micro-phonic guitar pick ups. But, whereas I will probably listen to BLACK FLAG's *My War* side two a couple hundred more times in my life, I will probably never listen to HOLIDAY STABBINGS again. Nothing too crazy here, live could be a different story. DEGÜELLO has a crazed heavy bass driven and nasty sound that crushes the EQ of all the other players in the band, which is cool in this case. I wish I knew what any of these band's singers were saying, none enunciate worth a shit, and no lyrics. I can smell the stale stench, the essence of PBR, of their devotees right through my speakers. SEXDECIMO remind my waxy ear holes a lot of HAWGJAW, or other disciples of the unholy masters of macabre: EYEHATEGOD, with that peculiar and striking mix of B'LAST and NEGATIVE APPROACH meets BLACK SABBATH, again with SEXDECIMO, a live performance would be the deciding factor to whether I would bother listening to this again. (BS)
(Hanging Out with the Cool Kids, PO Box 548, Oxford, OX1 1WJ, UK)

V/A – "The Ikon Records Story" LP

A slice of rock and roll's all too often overlooked history (1964-1966) from the vaults of Sacramento's Ikon Records, which offered bands recording and pressing packages. Compiler Alec Palao sums up this two disc set (also available on CD) quite neatly: "If you're looking for gnarly fuzz punk, you've come to the wrong place…The Ikon Records Story features only pure, unadulterated teenaged mid-1960s rock 'n' roll in its varying forms, whether they be surf, R&B, instrumental, folk-rock, Brit-Inv, or spy- themed novelty. The results are occasionally accomplished, but more often the warts-and-all reality of what went down." Detailed liners and great photos (positively regal pompadour on the KNIGHTSMEN's singer), of course, since it's a Crypt release. (DD)
(Crypt, www.cryptrecords.com)

V/A – "Internationally Pist 2" EP

Here we have a whole new crop of relatively-newer hardcore punk bands. It is a global project, which the title of the record states; I am all in favor of international DIY releases like this. We have TROPIEZO from Puerto Rico, BUSH from Brazil, TASTE OF FLESH from Indonesia, and REACCION, DESTRUX, and BLACKSS from the US. This is a cool comp—I like what the labels involved are doing with a release like this. As for the music, it's mid- to fast-paced hardcore punk done in various styles. Cool. (MS)
(Punx Before Profit, 209 Center Street Olean, NY 14760 and Blvd. Records, 537 Caroline St., Rochester NY 14620)

V/A – "Japan Thrash Revolution: Barbaric Thrash No. 8" CD

Tanoshi desu! 22 largely new bands from all over Japan deliver a 41-track sampler of manic fastcore, the common denominator being (what could be a 625 trademark) drum throttling lead off, speed, and upbeat ebullient energy. CHEAP SKATE, CONGA FURY, MIND OF ASIAN, SLAM CHOP, (the melody surfacing) CHAOTIX, WORLD DOWNFALL, and others shift in severity (from fast hardcore to all out grind), level of distortion, and screechiness or throaty-ness of vocals, but the speed, proficient attention to craft, and drum-driven attack remains largely at consistent high. So drink a thermos or two full of green tea, flip up the baseball cap, and pit it up to this for 50+ minutes. Sugoi! (KS)
(625, www.625thrash.com)

V/A – "Light the Fuse" CD

Three Australian bands—the VOLCANICS, the M-16s, and

FOURSTROKE—muster their better material and share a 12-track CD. All three hail from Perth (which is billed as "the most isolated place in the world," which it surely isn't), and work a sorta beer-hall quasi-punk angle that works for the greater part. The M-16s cover the VICTIMS' "Television Addict," which unfortunately stands as the disc's highwater mark…all these dudes' hearts and livers are in the right places, but their chosen art is meat 'n' taters barroom rock that, I gotta admit, doesn't get my blood or brain racing in the time-crossed year of 2005. (JH)
(Out of the Loop, PO Box 222, Tuart Hill, Western Australia, AUSTRALIA, 6938, www.outoftheloop.com.au)

V/A – "Propaganda Live" LP

God, I really love Finnish hardcore. The early Finnish scene may very well be the greatest in the world of early 80s hardcore. All of the best bands had the uncanny ability to write stuff that was as catchy as it was brutal—Finnish hardcore bands produced some really memorable songs, but they were fast as fuck, wild-sounding, and raw too. This LP, which was originally released on Propaganda Records, is probably one of the less essential early Finnish comps, mostly because it is, after all, a live LP. It features some of the better known Finnish bands (BASTARDS, TERVEET KÄDET, RIISTETYT), but it mostly has stuff from bands that are way more obscure (POKKEUSTILA,LAHDEN RAIVAUS, FUCKING FINLAND, RAATO, VAPAA KALJA—I know, who?!—but they're great). The sound quality is actually quite good for the most part—in particular, the guitar sound on the four POIKKEUSTILA songs is amazingly raw and effective. This LP has cool liner notes written in the early 80s by Voitto Vasko, one of the most important supporters of early Finnish punk and the dude behind P.Tuotanto records. This LP looks great too, like all of the other Assel stuff, and is yet another no-brainer reissue for Finnish punk fanatics. (GN)
(Assel, Groner Landstr, 48 37081, Göttingen, GERMANY)

V/A – "Take Penicillin Now" CD

A comp of every G7 label artist past and present, per press release. A strong comp with lots of unreleased stuff including a new and exclusive PROPAGANDHI track. This solid comp also has RANDY, WEAKERTHANS, WARSAWPACK, SUBMISSION HOLD, and MALEFACTION to name a few. 19 varied-but-quality tracks in all. (RL)
(G7 Welcoming Committee, www.g7welcomingcommittee.com)

V/A – "To Live and Die in Tampa Bay" CD

On this comp, which spotlights bands local to Tampa, Florida, bright-ish spots are TIM VERSION who cranks out melodic punk somewhat like PANTHRO UK 13, and ARCADE INFERNO who plays strained trashy pop songs. Other bands are CLAIRMEL, ROGUE SET, CHEST ROCKWELL, FLAT STANLEY, and couple more. Goddamn if they don't have a thing for the growly, strained vocals in Florida. Near every band on here has that going on. (WL)
(ADD, PO Box 8240, Tampa, FL 33674 www.addzine.com/records)

V/A – "Valley of the Tokyo Dolls—Tribute to Johnny Thunders" CD

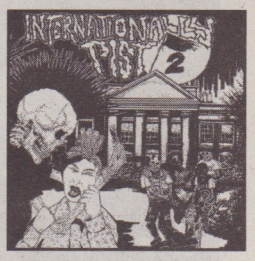
The best method of paying homage to a deceased junkie would be, to my mind, jogging around the block, chugging a glass of wheatgrass juice, and enjoying the good health and positive mental outlook forever denied to long-term heroin addicts. I like the NEW YORK DOLLS as much as the next guy (and probably as much as any group on this comp of Japanese bands—among them the 5.6.7.8s, JET BOYS, MISSLES, SUPER SNAZZ, the MAD 3, the SECT, GIMMIES, etc.), but the HEARTBREAKERS sorta stank, and Thunders' later solo material is guaranteed to slow the pulse and suck the soul. The bands give okay readings of the man's material (the 5,6,7,8s take on "Chatterbox" is fun) but, like all tribute records, *Valley of the Tokyo Dolls* is ultimately worthless. (JH)
(Discus)

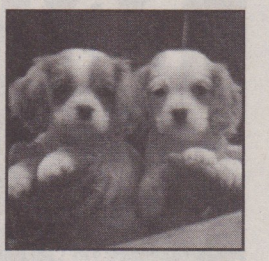
V/A – "We Don't Like You" CD

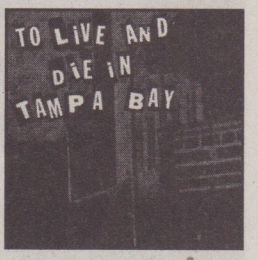
Italian oi/street punk compilation. A bunch of unreleased tracks, and some old stalwarts, as well as the new upstart or too. Musically, like most of the European stuff, its head and shoulders about the typical Yank fare. Thrill to the sounds of YOUNGANG, REBELDE, THE STAB, KLAXON, RAZZAPARTE, KLASSE KRIMINALE (back with a female vocalist once more), THE 4-MOORS, BRIGATA PARCOFLORIDA, ADUNATA, and a blast from the past from RAPPRESAGLIA. Top quality stuff, for sure! (RK)
(City Of The Dead, www.cotd.it)

V/A – "Zone No. 1: L'Esprit de Resistance" CD

French punk sampler. Two tracks each from seven bands, most of whom (HEXAZONE, CALAVERA, ZYGOMATIK ZONE, and LA RAIA) lean towards (and incorporate) the electronic/industrial/hip-hop end of punk. Plus a live track from old anarcho legends BERURIER NOIR, who invented the whole electro-punk crossover 25 years ago. GUARAPITA and LES HOULALA! provide more straightforward punk stylings. And—I'm guessing—all the bands are of the leftist/anarchist persuasion. Some great stuff here. (RK)







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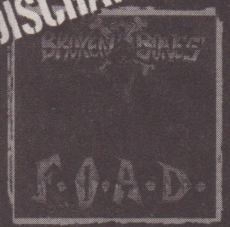

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DS 13 Aborted Teen Generation
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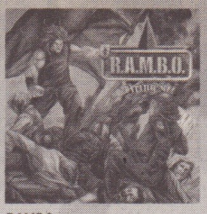

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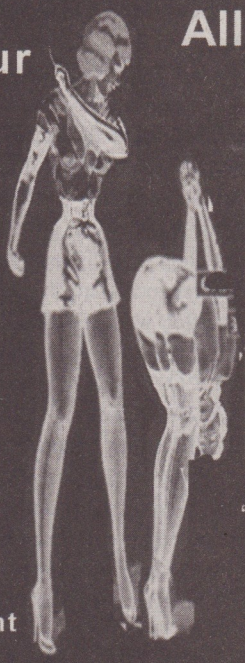

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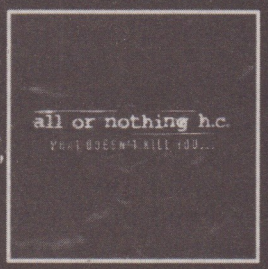

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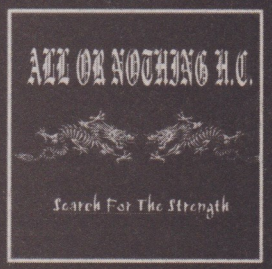

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DEMOS

Send all demos to: Erin Yanke, PO Box 1113, Portland,OR 97207. Please provide a postage paid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Erin Yanke & Peter Avery.

2ND CLASS CITIZENS have a short CD of well played and recorded songs. They play pretty basic hardcore punk tunes with three chord riffs, up-tempo drumming and screaming vocals. The sound is somewhere in between the GORILLA BUISCUTS and early Mystic Records stuff. Although there is nothing new about the music, the band does their one thing well. The music is tight with a couple of catchy hooks and lots of energy. (3 song CD, no lyrics. Can't find any info, sorry.) (Pete)

BARNBURNER plays straightforward punk rock, fast and solid and tight. No time for anything else, really. They spice it up a bit with intros and tiny solos, sure, but don't forget the point which is "GO!". The vocals are shouted, and sometimes buried by the music. They have one of my favorite song titles "Pretty (like D. Boon)". (3 song CD, lyrics included. 517 A Southgate Ave., Nashville, TN 37203.) (Erin)

BEAR PROOF SUIT is playing mean (not tough) hardcore and doing it well, although the guitar solos make me think the Milwaukee punkers are getting stoned more than drunk these days. Musically, they're tight, fast without blazing, and the vocals define confrontational. They do a RESIDENTS song, and a BLACK FLAG song too! Ragin'! ($4 ppd. 7 song CD, lyrics included. 2779 N. Humboldt, Milwaukee, WI 53212.) (Erin)

BLUE RAT has a three-song demo of mid-tempo punk songs that contain a faint catchy pop element. The guitars play simple riffs with a heavily overdriven, full sound. The vocalist has a gruff singing voice, which moves between almost spoken parts and nearly screaming. Altogether, the songs mix street punk with SNUFF/LEATHERFACE style punk. While this may sound a bit boring at first, the band saves themselves by adding some cleaver dynamic changes that turn basic riffs into catchy songs. (3 song CD, no lyrics. Real punks don't have homes to write to, www.bluerat.co.uk) (Pete)

CREEPING MEATBALL sounds like straightforward melancholy pop, but there's something in the basic rhythm and intricacies of the songs that take hold and add a deeper level than that. They're slow or mid-tempo songs, and have a lot going on. The vocals are sung in that crooning emo style. (5 song CD, no lyrics included. 6627 N. Congress, Portland, OR 97217.) (Erin)

DSC sent in two demos that both sound like lo-fi grindcore. Their unpredictable stop-and-start tempo changes sound like someone learning how to drive a stick shift. The dual vocals are growly and dark, and hidden sometimes by the cymbals. ($2 ppd. 9 songs on one demo, 7 on the other, no lyrics included. PO Box 500, Ft. Loudon, PA 17224.) (Erin)

FAUXHAWKS play driving political punk with some undead crypt keeper vocals. Really, there isn't too much that is "faux" about it. Their awesome face-stomping mosh parts make me believe that they ride bears in the pit and spit burning napalm on cops daily. Totally recommended. (10 song CD, lyrics included. PO Box 366, New Castle NSW 2300, AUSTRALIA) (Ariel)

THE FOCUS is great, playing the uniquely Australian combination of melody and dissonance that I love. When the guitar is jarring, the rhythm section is tight and still interesting. The drums are solid, totally with it, and the bass doesn't rest on what the guitar is doing, but they aren't showy or distracting from the overall songs. The vocals are shared but sung in the same heartfelt way, and blend well with the music. This rules. (4 song cassette, no lyrics included. P.O. Box 244, Northcote 3070 VIC, AUSTRALIA). (Erin)

FORTY WATTS play stripped down mid tempo snotty punk rock! The lady vocals, whether spoken or sung, have a nice touch of venom. Nothing you haven't heard before, but it's always a treat to hear it done well. ($2 ppd. 6 song CD, some lyrics included. 34 School St. Brighton MA 02135.) (Erin)

GEORGE MOSHINGTON rules for the band name alone! Good job! Musically they blend angry hardcore and early-80s California punk with some emo hardcore vocals, singing great anthems and giving out a bit of historical information. The over-the-top guitar solos touch my heart, but are not necessarily going to be charming to all you tough punks. ($2 ppd. 5 song CD, lyrics included. 2164 E. Vista Bonita Dr., Phoenix, AZ 85024.) (Erin)

HOTROD FURY is an almost all instrumental surf band, with only backups to enhance the mood. Other than a slightly slower pace than I'm used to, I would say they're exactly what you'd expect of a surf band, which includes covering classics of the genre, such as "Rebel Rouser" and "Rumble." It's fun! ($2 ppd. 11 song CD, no lyrics included [duh]. 30 Gardner St. Apt 2, Portsmouth, NH 03801.) (Erin)

NOCTUNAL EMISSION busts out some metal influenced thrashcore. The messy, high-speed songs are driven by basic but solid up-tempo drumming and chunky power chords. The vocalist has a deep voice and alternates between screaming and growling (he can also fit a whole bunch of words into a small space of time). The songs are fairly typical of the style, starting out fast, throwing in a breakdown or two, tossing in some wanking on the guitar and finishing off with a bang. The songs are pretty sloppy and the recording isn't great but they sort of have that 80s Midwest punk feel that brings me back. (9 song CD, with lyrics. 935 Worden #2, Missoula, MT 59802, kickboy_face@hotmail.com) (Pete)

"Punk's Dead and It's Your Fault" is a compilation of hardcore bands from all over the world (but mostly Europe and the US). Most bands stick to playing thrashy, high-speed hardcore. Although there are a ton of bands here, only a couple really stick out. MY BIBLE COMPANY from the US plays solid, BORN AGAINST style hardcore that is worth a listen. PANJ from Croatia has a pretty basic hardcore tune that is fairly catchy with tons of wanking but the vocalist really pulls you in with his somewhat goth style vocals. EVERYBODYS ENEMY from Japan busts out one crazy high-speed thrash song and another pret-

ty fast screamer that just blow you away with the high-pitched vocals. HATE CORROSION from Brazil turns out a metal influenced thrash song with a very full sound. Their two vocalists really pull the song together, one having a high screaming voice and the other having an out of this world, deep growl. There are a bunch of other bands on here but again there wasn't much that stood out. (48 song CD, no lyrics, Sick of Talk Records, PO Box 9723, Reno, NV 89507.) (Pete)

RED LIGHT MAYHEM plays popish, punkish tunes on their demo CD. It sounds like they are originally from the Chicago area so I will only make Chicago references. Let's say they fall somewhere in between FRICTION, GAUGE and early ALKALINE TRIO. Pop-punk songs with a JAWBREAKER influence but also a slight early emo influence as well. The songs are fairly catchy but not amazing. (9 song CD, no lyrics. www.redlightmayhem.com) (Pete)

ROTTING OUT plays classic, high-energy, guitar-driven punk rock with good motormouth speaking vocals. Callie says it would be good to skate to, and who am I to disagree? Solid! ($2 ppd. 4 song Cassette, lyrics included. 128 Cherry Hill Drive, Fenton, MO 63026.) (Erin)

RUNAWAY TIM plays catchy punk rock that flirts equally with melody and depression, while still keeping things moving along. Think LEMONHEADS after they signed to a major label. The vocals have a droning tone to them, even when they're a bit snotty, but mostly they're sung full-on. They occasionally flirt with other genres (ska breakdown, square dance tinges) to the detriment of the rock, but in general it's got a good feel to it. (9 song CD, lyrics included. 6776 Pearl Place, Dublin, CA 94568.) (Erin)

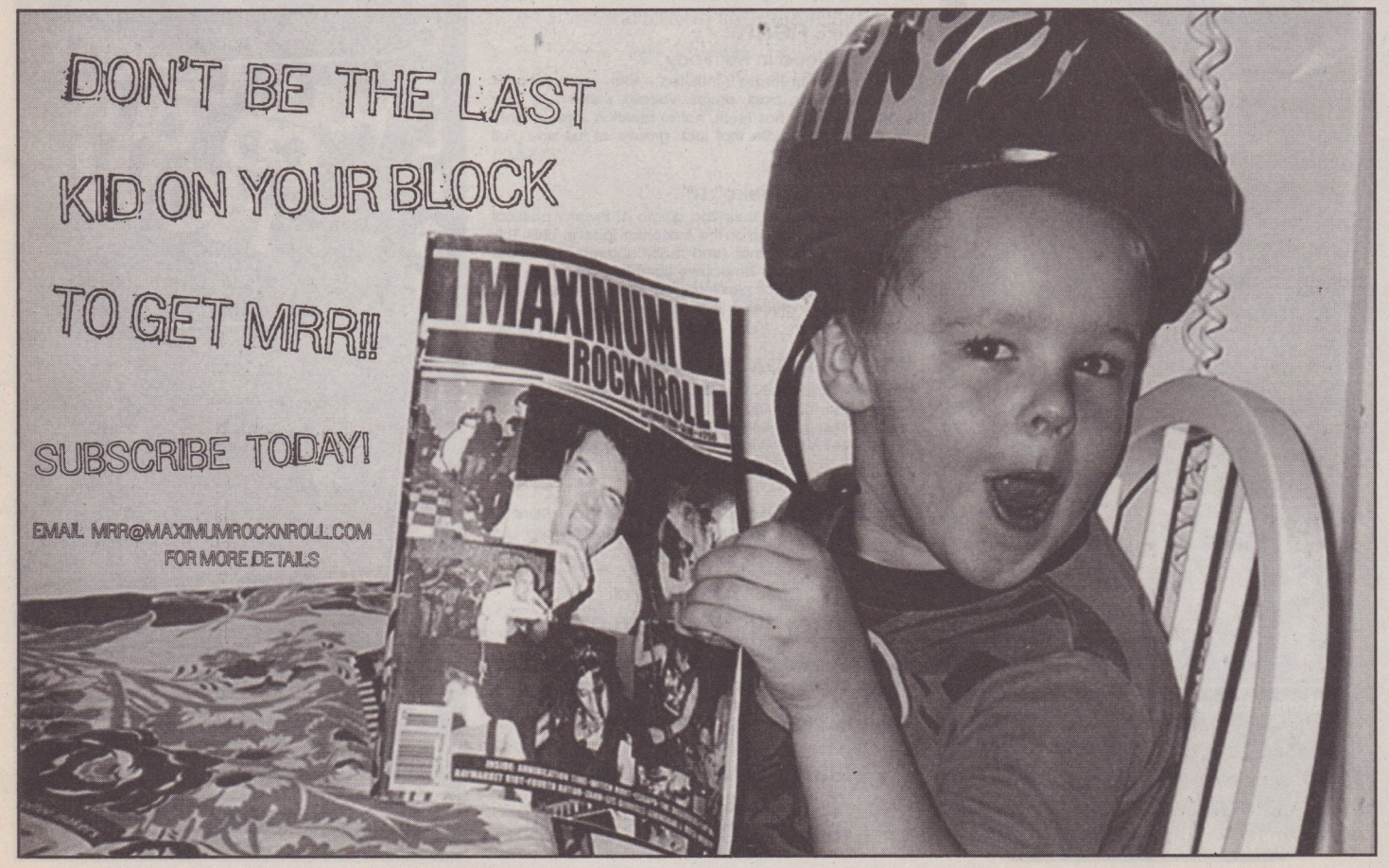
SCHWEINHUNDEN sounds like the guys who were heshers then found punk rock, then got really good at their instruments and smoked pot and mixed all those influences together. The vocals are pissed-off, shouting style. They go into speed-metal territory with their guitar solos. And, they do a DEAD KENNEDY'S cover. ($4 ppd. 12 song CD, no lyrics included. 3025 S. Rodehaver Rd., Guysville, OH 45735.) (Erin)

SOMETHING FIERCE mixes European post-punk style with basic pre-hardcore punk rock. The vocal style depends on the song, so we've got ranting, particularly sweet female vocals, and good solid punk rock singing. This has gotten under my skin, yeah! ($4 ppd. 4 song CD, no lyric sheet. 219 Marshall Apt. 213, Houston, TX 77006.) (Erin)

Dear **SPARKLE MOTION**, Your pop culture reference is tired. *Donnie Darko* was a good movie, sure, I guess. But your vaguely street punk style with only mediocre lyrics drag you down to a sad level. Yaaaawn. Try harder. Love, The Punx. (Several song CD, lyrics included. idoubtyourcommitment.com, smpunk@gmail.com) (Ariel)

VELOCITY UT sounds more like a buck-wild indoor pool party than anything else. A lo-fi explosion of noise and echoey screaming that somehow rocks you the maximum amount possible in under two minutes. Yes. (4 song CD, no lyrics. 212-86Nakazato Taramicho Nishisonogi-gun Nagasaki 859-0405, JAPAN, electlo@d2.dion.ne.jp) (Ariel)

THE WELCH BOYS play super catchy street punk/pop tunes. They turn out 12 mid- to up-tempo songs with pop sensibilities and a punk edge. The vocalist has a gruff singing voice, the guitarist sticks to power chords, the drumming is solid and the bass player stays busy with catchy bass lines. They are sort of crossing the pop-punk and street punk boundaries in the same way that the SWINGIN' UTTERS did. Oh yea, apparently there is a guy from SLAPSHOT in the band. (12 song CD, with lyrics. www.thewelchboys.com) (Pete)



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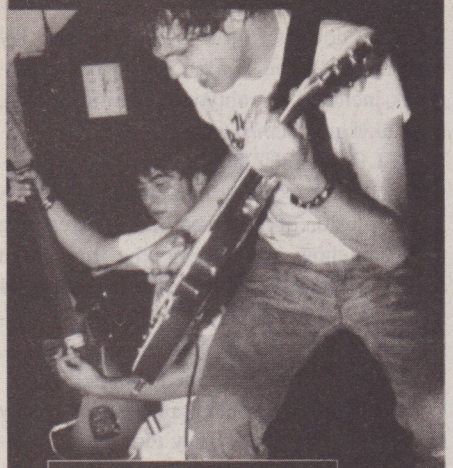

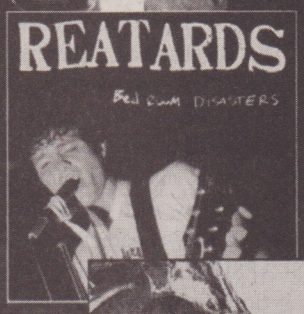

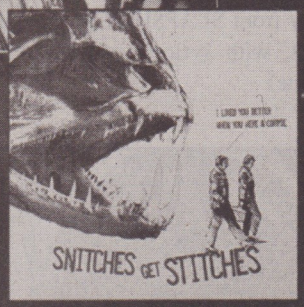

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"There's Blood in My Body" 7"
Vomit-noise-rant-thrash inflicted with conventional weapons (guitar, bass, drums, vocals) wielded by four lunatics. This stuff has teeth, not to mention some mighty strange lyrics. Beware that lock groove at the end. Full color cover. 7" $4.00

BLUTTAT "Nkululeko" LP
An official reissue of their 2nd album of thrashy political hardcore, originally out on the Ausschuss label in 1984. This comes with the original (and really enormous) fold-out poster sleeve, with a Zimbabwe liberation poster on one side, and all the lyrics plus lots of photos and graphics on the other. Also includes a Bluttat sticker. German import. LP $14.00

"PROPAGANDA LIVE" comp LP
Another reissue of a classic from Finland's great Propaganda label, this 1983 hardcore compilation featured tracks from BASTARDS, TERVEET KADET, RIISTETYT, RAATO, VARAUS, VAAPA KALIJA, and more! German import. LP $14.00

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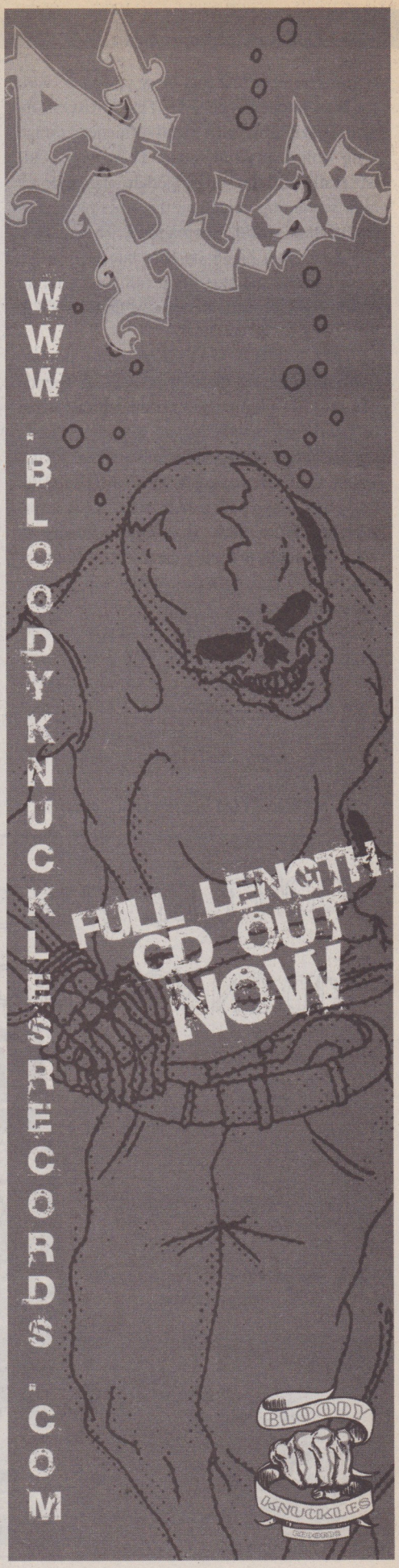


ZINES

Reviews by: (AR) Aragorn, (HB) Heather Blotto, (JB) Julia Booz Ullrey, (PC) Paul Curran (MD) Mikel Delgado, (BD) Ben Ditch, (LG) Layla Gibbon, (CH) Cassie Harwood, (HH) Harald Hartmann, (JM) Jeff Mason, (GN) Golnar Nikpour, (CR) Casey Ress, (AS) Andy Shoup, (DS) Dionne Stevens.

Please send your zine in for review to MRR, PO Box 470760, San Francisco, CA 94147. Write down any information you want included in the review; method of printing, number of pages, issue number and postpaid price. If you want us to include a foreign postpaid price, tell us. If you accept trades, tell us. The only information we will include is what you provide us.

AK INK #16 / $1 or trade
8.5 x 7 – copied – 28 pgs
Here's another issue of AK INK, which seems to be coming out pretty regularly now. This issue has an interview with Joe Escalante from the Vandals in which they talk about his work on the new movie Cake Boy. This zine is a good resource for Alaskan locals who can find out about upcoming shows or read reviews of local bands. I don't think a lot of touring bands make it up to Alaska man, but this time around the Misfits made an appearance and there are multiple reviews of these shows in this issue. (CH)
PO Box 244235 / Anchorage, AK 99524 / www.akink.org

ATOMIC #5 / $5
10.5 x 8 – printed – 32 pgs
I have mixed feelings about this one. Like, the zine has this fancy print job and an awesome layout throughout the zine, but then the cover is this ridiculous drawing of some spiky punk dudes that made me embarrassed to look at. Like, it's not even cool. Then is costs $5 bucks an issue! I can understand that probably ties into the fancy print job... or maybe the price coincides with the issue number...in which case you better get this one cause issue six is gonna set you back six bones man! Pick up this issue for interviews with bands Good Morning, The Framed, and El Punkeke and the Aliens. There's an article about the closing down of the First Avenue show space in MN, which everyone seems pretty indifferent about. There are also interviews with Fred Durst of Limp Bizkit and Mark Adkins of Guttermouth. Hahaha, what in the world? This dude Mark Adkins comes across as a total fucking jerk! "All these new bands are out there dressing like girls and the only reason they're doing it is to make money. They don't love dressing like girls, they can't. And if they do? Well, I'm embarrassed for them... Is that where the heart and soul of America is?" Hahahaha, awesome. (CH)
PO Box 50113 / Minneapolis, MN 55405

BLURT! #3 / $1
4.5 x 5.5 – copied – 60 pgs
A handful of vignettes written by Lew about a number of friends, and times well spent with them. Lew's writing style is kind of choppy, full of fragment sentences that are nonetheless pregnant with meaning. *Blurt!* is a "per-zine" for sure, but it looks really nice—the layout is simple but very inviting and quite well done, unlike too many zines these days. The absurd and funny drawings that break up the chapters of this zine are also a nice touch. There are some standard stories of traveling, hanging out, road-tripping, etc, but overall this zine is more memorable than most in the genre. Worth checking out. (GN)
Lew Houston / 135 Wapwallopen Rd. / Nescopeck, PA 18535
lewskerdu@gmail.com

CITY TRASH #21 & 22 / $3
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 48 pgs
A cool cut'n'paste garage punk fanzine out of Holland; issue #21 has the Tyrades on the cover and features the Manikins and Alicja Trout of Lost Sounds fame, while #22 features Th'Losin Streaks on the cover and the Rippers and the Staggers inside. The Tyrades interview was pretty interesting, and the reviews in both issues are of all the best records of the recent garage punk scene and are decently informative. There are bits in both issues that are in Dutch, but the majority of the zine is in English. A good DIY zine for "wild and raw rockin' primitive teens." (GN)
Mark Kuurman / Biezenveld 48 / 7943 MC Meppel / Holland
citytrash@hotmail.com

COLDHANDSDEADHEART #19 / $2
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 46 pgs
This zine is full of black ink style drawings ranging from weird monsters and stuff to political commentary in the form of cheesy puns. I love puns man! A true form of expression. This dude probably spends all day thinking up this stuff and all night drawing it. Anyway, this is a nice collection of drawings. (CH)
Mike Twohig / 72-1 Meadow Farm South / North Chili, NY 14514
www.angelfire.com/ill/miketwohig

DAYBREAK #6 / $1 or free to prisoners & single parents
11 x 17 – printed – 12 pgs
Unlike some other, more old-school looking anarcho newsletters, this one definite-

ly has a punk aesthetic. Punk as in drawings of circle-As inside of flowers, kids on bikes, sections on DIY, and one ill-advised use of the Misfits font—no surprises 'cause *Daybreak* is based in Minneapolis. Actually, the layout of this looks pretty nice, which is important in trying to differentiate between the tons of anarcho

newsletters out there. The content features anti-war stuff, a page of international news, a feature on the Chicago transit fare strike, and punk zine staples, the columns section and the reviews section. Certainly not the most sophisticated political journal out there, but hey, you can't have everything. (GN)
Daybreak / PO Box 14007 / Minneapolis, MN 55414

DEATH OF THE SKELETONS #3 / $1 or trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 32 pgs
If you want to get people behind your cause or ideas, you don't want to come across as a jerk. This zine starts off with a story about the editor's attempt to get his dream job, and when he doesn't, he acts like such a vitriol filled asshole, that you're not surprised that no one wants to hire him. There is some minimal information on worker collectives (and having worked in one for over 10 years, I'd recommend that this guy learn some anger management techniques as well as enlighten himself to the anti-oppression movement if that is a career direction he'd like to move in…) and personal writing on some pretty lousy jobs. (MD)
Braden Cannon / 14-19 Happy Tree Apt 205 / Nishi 16 Minami 5 / Obihiro, Hokkaido 080-0027 / Japan
emak_bakia@hotmail.com

El LOCO #1 / $2
8 x 11 – copied – 16 pgs
Um. Not sure where to start. The cover has a sharpied scribble of a skull, which actually looks like something you would put on your bedroom door to keep your little sister out. I get the feeling Jim has been involved in punk for a while; there's a poem in here bemoaning the loss of *Flipside*… He reviews U2's last LP, the latest 7 Seconds, and *Signals, Calls, and Marches,* too. These three random reviews are on the first page of the zine—that's all there's room for on the page because of the *HUGE TYPEFACE*. There are also breakfast cereal reviews, tales of life as an outcast in a land of angry rednecks, life with paranoid schizophrenia, poetry, a piece of Hunter S Thompson's impact on his life… A window into someone else's existence, not really my thing somehow. (LG)
Jim / 546 S. Park Apt D / Medford WI 54451

THE HATED #1 / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 52 pgs
This zine is by a prisoner. It is hand written and aesthetically amateurish. The content is very engaging. Signals from another planet kind of engaging, as if everything you know and think you understand is turned 45 degrees off kilter. There is disturbing sexually explicit writing, survival stories and sentencing horror shows within these pages. Mostly there are cries of the broken victims of our prosecutorial society begging for someone to pay attention to them. One of the standout articles is one where some of the slang that the writer and his crew use, as a kind of code language, is deciphered and explained in some detail. You could never decipher it without the key provided. It is an interesting lesson in institutional survival. (AR)
William Wright #0405301546 / 630 E. Rialto Ave / San Bernardino CA 92408

ILLUSION FIELDS / 2$ or a mix tape trade
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 54 pgs
This is an impressive collection of New Orleans inspired punk poetry. Really, it is. Topics range from train hoppin' and gutter punk girls to drinking with ghosts, bikes, and walking alone in the darkness. Each is accompanied by a photo, which invites the reader a bit deeper into the poetic moment. To me, the aid of related visual offerings make poetry more palatable. The layout too is classic, and looks good—cut and paste, typewriter font, and clean contrast. You decide. (DS)
Moose / 1324 Marigny St. / New Orleans, LA 70117

IMPACT PRESS #57 / $3 ppd
8.5 x 11 – printed – 64 pgs
I don't know why these type of zines fail to inspire me – lots of kind of rehashed, familiar liberal politics—the war on dissent, why gays should be allowed in the military (how about why gays should help *destroy* the military?), media bias, Bush is a moron, etc etc. None of the writers seem to be actually behind the putting together of the zine, which takes away a lot of its personality—I prefer when the editors do more of the writing. Add enough Warped tour ads and punk/HC record reviews, and you have a somewhat schizophrenic rag. Maybe you'll like it more than I did, obviously a lot of effort goes into putting this together. (MD)
PMB 361 / 10151 University Blvd / Orlando FL 32817
www.impactpress.com

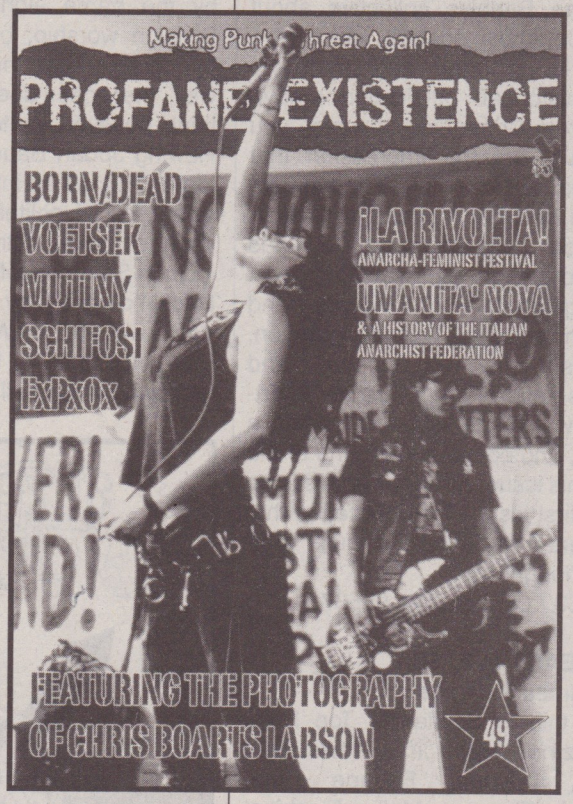
KING CAT #64 $3
8.5x46 – copied – 40 pgs
This is a collection of simple line comics and stories about the death of his father. It's very whimsical somehow despite the subject matter, someone trying to come to terms with loss and what is left behind,

memories, songs, things. (LG)
(John Porcellino, PO Box 170535 San Francisco CA 94117)

THE LA SCENE REPORTER #15 / postage/donations or trade
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 6 pgs
This zine is pretty cool. It focuses on the South L.A. punk and ska scene, mostly letting people know about upcoming shows, kind of like the Bay Area's *The List*. The difference here though is that unlike the list this is layed out like a cut and paste zine and includes newspaper clippings of local events, advertisements for local zines and things and a little bit of writing too. A nice little newsletter. Every scene should have something like this I think. (BD)
Nick G / 312 W. 8th St / Los Angeles, CA 90014

LAST HOURS #10 / $4
8.5 x 11 – printed – 116 pgs
If the day ever comes that *Maximumrocknroll* decides to do separate *magazine* and *zine* sections, *Last Hours* will definitely be filed with the magazines. That isn't to say that it's some kind of a fancy, glossy affair, though. *Last Hours* has a radical, pro-prisoner, anti-work slant, and interviews with Blag Dahlia of the Dwarves, Propagandhi, Los Fastidios, as well as the dudes behind *Water into Beer* and *Gadgie* zines. A side note: *Last Hours* was previously known as *Rancid News.* (AS)
PO Box 382 / 456-458 The Strand / London, WC2R 0DZ
www.lasthours.org.uk

LIDSPECULUM #1 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 40 pgs
This is a first time zine and it shows. It is a perfect example of what the DIY ethic in practice looks like when you are just getting started. Horrific spelling and grammar, incomprehensible font and layout choices, and content that has barely leapt off of the web and onto the page are all represented. The content seems to hinge on the idea that participation in the "media war" makes you rise above the passive consumption of media as spectacle. Ways to become the media are explored. *Z* magazine, www.cooperativeresearch.org, and Democracy Now are some of the cited sources. (AR)
PO Box 50349 / Kalamazoo, MI 49005



LIVING PROOF #4 / $3
5.5 x 4.25 – printed – 82 pgs
In *Living Proof*, the writer (a guy named Andrew) tells personal tales while jumping back and forth between the present and defining moments from his past, and includes some photographs from National Parks in Utah. This is the kind of stuff that I usually like most: slice of life, observational stuff, taking particular little incidents and drawing conclusions that just about anyone alive could relate to. There is, however, something slightly lacking here. I think it's that in Andrew's writing (at which he's extremely adept), there is the tendency to focus a little too much on details of too little significance, which are of questionable interest to the reader. Overall, good stuff, but could be better. (AS)
PO Box 14211 / Chicago IL 60614
livingproof@atm4.net

THE OBJECTOR July 2005 / no price listed
8.5 x 11 – copied – 20 pgs
Published by the Central Committee for Conscientious Objectors, this magazine is dedicated to combating military recruiting while touching on related issues. Their focus is on populations most at risk—youth, particularly blacks, Latinos, Natives, et al. I especially appreciated the inside look at their counseling hotline and the stories of applying pressure to high school administrations to counteract recruiters. A student contributes her tale of fucking with these jerks when they came to her school to administer a standardized test. A Wal-Mart boycott is also discussed. (JM)
CCCO / 405 14th St / Oakland, CA 94612

POOR AND FORGOTTEN #22 / $1, trade, or stamps
11 x 17 – copied – 2 pgs
Cleverly folded so as to grow from quarter-size to the dimensions listed above, this jailhouse creation starts with an intro recounting recent prisoner deaths, the editor's psych meds, and his upcoming release. There is a short, decent interview with CT veterans Broken, a band photo, a word search, some writing on prisoner support, and illustrations of heavy metal record covers. The two small ads are for a local radio show and a Serbian vegan cookbook. This is all right, though not crucial. (JM)
PO Box 59 / Linwood, MA 01525

PROFANE EXISTENCE #48 / $5
7 x 10 – printed – 98 pgs
This is *Profane Existence* for the new millennium. Glossy covered and five dollars! Why? However, don't judge a book by its cover as they say...Maybe its cover price, but not its cover. On the inside Profane Existence seems pretty much the same as it has always been. Interviews with black clad, be-dreadlocked bands such as Another Oppressed System, Migra Violenta, Hellshock, and The Dagda, complete with stark contrast black and white pics, a very in depth Polish scene report, and an article on the rise of punk in Argentina are all in this issue. Then of course you've got yer zine reviews, you've got yer columns, and yer record reviews. Oh yea, and a whole bunch of vegan dessert recipes. I just don't know though, is Profane Existence really making punk a threat again? Maybe it's time for a new slogan. (BD)
PO Box 8722 / Minneapolis, MN 55408

PROFANE EXISTENCE #49 / $5
7 x 10 – printed – 98 pgs
I am not the first to say that *Profane Existence* reads like a book. Shit, it even looks like one. That aside, what is inside is a whole lot of goodness that will leave its

reader better informed and possibly inspired. This issue details the La Rivolta fest, put together by Erika Ransom, esteemed columnist in this here rag, and a handful of other talented and driven female activists / punks. The featured

artist is Chris Boarts-Larson, creator of *Slug & Lettuce*, as well as a regular *Maximumrockandroll* contributor. She has been documenting NYC squatters, punks, and their bands for the last 15 years or something like that. She takes tremendous photographs, and this feature offers up a serious spread containing many of those photos. Chris never has a shortage of things to say either, and her insights make for a quality interview. This feature alone makes the issue worth obtaining. To sweeten the issue further, they follow the Chris Boarts spread with a brief Italian Anarchist Federation history surrounding the *Umanita Nova* newspaper, created by folks dedicated to the movement. This also qualifies as top-notch reading material. The columns are always varied and *Profane Existence* even serves up an ample review section and letters too, if that's what you like. So, if you get over the gloss, you'll get the goods. (DS)
Profane Existence Collective / PO Box 8722 / Minneapolis, MN 55408

ROLLING THUNDER #1 / $5
8 x 11 – printed – 116 pgs
This is yet another beautiful project from Crimethinc. The front and back cover in particular are enough to bring tears to your eyes, they are that attractive and hopeful. The back cover features text along the lines of "Punch Cops in the Face… and get away with it" (with an accompanying image of a cop in the middle of a melee) which, like Crimethinc in general, is a sentiment best left unexamined. The content of this first issue of their "Anarchist Journal of Dangerous Living" relies on more reprints than I would otherwise expect from a Crimethinc. publication (A cartoon from Anarchy comics, the for Andres Roya flyer from Portland, a DAAA report back from Modesto, and a lengthy report by the Beehive collective about their Plan Columbia poster), which is a good thing. I'd go further and say this is the most "historical" publication I have ever seen from Crimethinc, in which you might actually get the impression that Crimethinc is part of a larger movement (cough) and not that movement itself. A central portion of this magazine is a series of reportbacks from spectacular direct action engagements around the globe and direct action lessons. The inauguration, the EU summit in Greece, and autonomous action France are all reported on. Copwatch, de-schooling, being a houseguest, and consent are some of the lessons in this issue. All together this is an impressive first issue of a publication that mostly suffers from being too much without being enough. (AR)
PO Box 1963 / Olympia WA 98507

RUNNIN' FEART #12 / $3
8 x 5.5 – printed – 64 pgs
Apparently this is Scotland's Top Punk Rawk Fanzine. Mass interviews with Pottedheid, Dillinger Escape Plan, Nekromantix, Flogging Molly, Fleshies, Dead Pets. Tsunami Bomb, Fearties, Knockouts, Filaments, Groovie Ghoulies, Tiger Army, Toxik Ephex… Uh you get the picture? Every band that plays his town gets interviewed. There are tons of reviews too. The Tonik Ephex stuff is pretty cool, the old Crass records band? Some crazy photos of their 25 years in punk…(LG)
Callum / 12 Crusader Crescent / Stewarton Ayrshire / Scotland KA3 3BL

SAMPLE PRESS / #5 / $2
5.5 X 8.5 – copied – 32 pgs
Sample Press (also a distro) covers the Texas music scene, with a variety of musical styles represented including punk, experimental, noise, and country. Inside you'll find show and record reviews and an interview or two. Does this mean that all of the bands inside are part of the Sample Press roster? Pretty much, but it's a pretty earnest affair. (AS)
PO Box 471159 / Fort Worth, TX 76147

SHADOWPLAY #15 / 50p or SAE
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 17 pgs
Shadowplay fanzine out of England contains musical notes of the indie rock variety, but is not limited to oddly-named band info only; there are some guest stories that stray from the aforementioned topic. More important than what is inside is what's on the outside, right? I was excited by the name alone, as it implies Joy Division worship; but the zine does not openly reference the Manchester trio. Oh well, the editor does seem to do everything he ever wanted to, including interviewing Judah Bauer of Blues Explosion fame. And, as an interviewer, Alex does a sweet job of politely schooling the opinionated rocker. Other musical mentions include Sunn-O, Jeffrey Lewis, and Aesop Rock; I'd prefer Joy Division any day. (DS)
Alex Lawson / 28 Warwick Rd / Mapperly Park, Nottingham / NG3 5ES
alexowl26@hotmail.com

SOLITARY EXSISTENCE #2 / $?
11 x 8.5 – copied – 48 pgs
Read all about the adventures of "Sk8" as he recalls lost love and skating around SF listening to TSOL on his boombox while completely out of his mind on LSD. Is he still out of his mind out LSD? I don't know. After I finished this I definitely felt out of

my mind. All I could do was stare blankly at Sk8's drawing of a half-naked woman holding a gun with a circle E on her stomach and a joint dangling from her lips. This dude is 25 and in prison. He had to smuggle this zine through the bars of his cell and past the prison walls page by page! This zine will blow your mind... in one way or another. (CH)
Travis Harramen / #15833906 SRCI / 777 Stanton Blvd. / Ontario, OR. 97914

STRAP YOURSELF IN #8 / $2
7 x 8.5 – copied – 29pgs
Don't be fooled by the crudely drawn comics found within. They possess intelligent wit and are of a political nature, which many *MRR* readers may find agreeable. Comics depict pesky military recruiters, (taking over the community college job fairs, have you noticed?) and all-American, nosey neighbors. You've got a splash of painful childhood memories thrown in and a few other tales of injustice. Queers and lefties alike will be proud to carry around a copy, to read and then pass along. Good stuff. (DS)
PO Box 954 / Bloomington, IN 47402

SUPER JETBOYS FLYER COLLECTION / free
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 80 pgs
So this thing is billed is "the super Jetboys flyer collection". It's a collection of flyer art from Ono "Assman" Ching, who was in the Jetboys, the Mighty Four, and Pearl Schwartz and has done flyers and album art for his bands, as well as for the 5.6.7.8.'s, Guitar Wolf, the Stallions, and a few others. His style is like Jack Davis of *Mad Magazine* fame, combined with a bit of Ed "Big Daddy" Roth and a dash of Basil Wolverton. It's sloppy and fun and over-the-top…just like all of the bands he did art for. I don't know if he's making a lot of these or not; mine was labeled 80/100. Get your hands on a copy if you can. It's good stuff. (AS)
onoching@aol.com

SORRY TREES #1 / $1
8.5 x 11 – copied – 22 pgs
Here are some things that *may* make your zine suck: stealing images from video box covers and using them on your front cover, having little or no graphic aesthetic whatsoever, and stapling the pages in the upper left corner, instead of folding your pages over and putting the staples through the middle. *Sorry Trees*, in addition to the afore-mentioned, features interviews with MDC and Thumbs Up, as well as some recipes, reviews, and opinion pieces. (AS)
13329 Winterstown Rd / Felton, PA 17322

THE STUDENT INSURGENT June issue
16.6 / $15/year
14 x 17 – printed – 28 pgs
Straight outta Eugene, and how can you tell? Well, sure, it's published from the University there, and deals with local issues like trying to get the city to criminalize gender discrimination, and protests against conservatism in the College of Education. But I was thinking more of the mundane train-hopping article, the full page ad for the Hemp Industrial Organization, the ugly computer-generated artwork that makes up the centerfold, and the disclaimer tacked on to the piece about "a law-abiding student's" struggle with the University's firearm prohibition. The thing on 18th century pirates' relative egalitarianism was pretty nice. If you find this free on campus, you might take a look. (JM)
UO Student Insurgent / Suite One / 1228 University of Oregon / Erb Memorial Union / Eugene, OR 97403

TABLE 9 FROM OUTER SPACE #1 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 44 pgs
Comic with a good graphic style. The story is, um, well, like some punk kids who work at McDonald's, except it's the future and they're in outer space...fighting imperialist cyborgs…(MD)
1112 N 8th Street / Columbia MO 65201
scumbugg@yahoo.com

THOUGHTS OF MY LIBERATION / $?
8.5 x 11 – copied – 12 pgs
This guy recently got turned on to anarchy and this is his hand-written explication of his ideas. I am frequently not into these types of things, but this one is pretty good. He talks about complacency among the general populace, the ubiquity of drugs, and compares anarchy to the unwritten rules of prison. The last two pages list contacts and recommended reads. On the back cover it says Copyright 2005, what's up with that? The author is a Native American in a Secure Housing Unit (an especially restrictive prison) who's looking at release in 2007. (JM)
Frederick Fisher #10447-041 / PO Box 1000 / Lewisburg, PA 17837 /
irontipiwarrior@yahoo.com

TOINEN VAIHTOEHTO #187 / trade
6 x 8 – printed – 32 pgs – Finnish
Aside from the fact that I can't read this, it's similar to a tiny *MRR*, with lots of reviews, some interviews (Driven Dynamo, Inner Conflict), and plenty of ads. (MD)
PO Box 1 / 65200 Vaasa / Finland
www.punkinfinland.net/tv/english

TOKIDOKI #1 / $1 or trade
4.25 x 5.5 – copied – 40 pgs
A beautifully made zine about dropping everything and moving to Japan. The two editors both tell separate stories of being an outsider, experiencing a new culture, and trying to get by in life. Decent first effort. (MD)
Braden Cannon / 14-19 Happy Tree Apt 205 / Nishi 16 Minami 5 / Obihiro, Hokkaido 080-0027 / Japan
emak_bakia@hotmail.com

TROUBLED SLEEP / $3
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 98 pgs
Troubled Sleep is not exactly a fanzine. It would be more accurately described as a self-published fictional novel. The protagonist in this narrative is Jane Olson, a male-to-female transsexual. In this short story we see Jane and a small cast of her friends and acquaintances learning to deal with being queer and out in a small Southern town on what is known as "the buckle of the Bible Belt," where the majority of people are conservative Christians. Jane and her friends are the freaks and outcasts who spend their time fretting

over how people can be so ignorant and unaccepting, not just of their queer lifestyles, but of any kind of dissenting feelings towards the town, the South, the country and indeed the world in general. (BD)
Samantha Dorsett / PO Box 954/ Bloomington, IN 47402

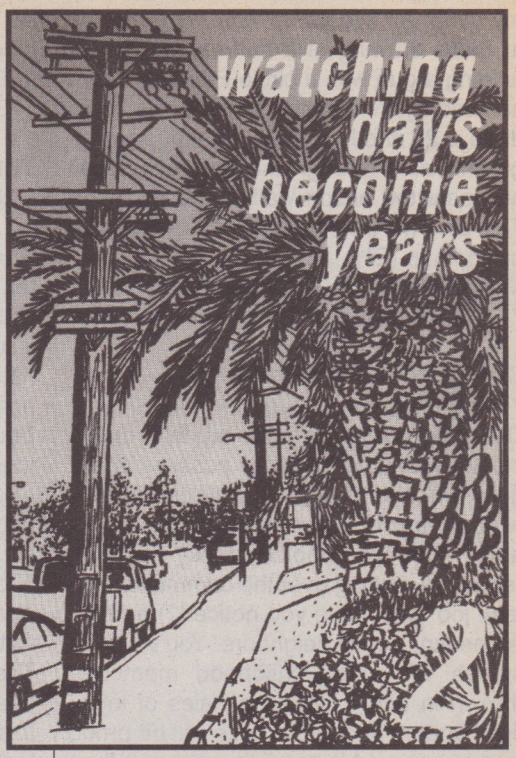
TURNING THE TIDE Vol. 18 No. 3 / $?
11 x 17 – printed – 8 pgs
Try as I might, I have a hard time getting into printed political newsletters like this. It's hard to look past the (bad) boring layout, poor photo quality, and sloganeering ("We're one people without borders!"). There are pieces about harassment of activists in California, a Puerto Rican POW, some op-eds, and a poem (no shit!) about gentrification. It's not too long—the sort of thing you'd pick up and read on the bus maybe. (GN)
PART / PO Box 1055 / Culver City, CA 90232

UNLESS INDICATED #6 / $1 +2 Stamps/Trade
8.5x6 – printed – 26 pgs
This reminds me of two things—firstly that column in *The Onion* written by an overtly enthusiastic woman who calls her readership Jeanskateers, do you know the one I mean? If you do then this zine is as if she was waxing lyrical about DIY culture rather than puffy paint teddy bear sweatshirts. A quote if you will: "Earth Day was like any other day for me… I greeted all with a 'Happy Earth Day!' The response I usually got was 'Is it Earth Day? What do you do on Earth Day?' My shoulders slumped and I felt sad. No one cares? I care. I care so much sometimes I think I care too much, not just about Earth Day but about people in general." It also reminds me somehow of those *Reader's Digest* anecdotes about "Our Wacky Kids!" that people send in. And in the middle of that sea of saccharine there's a contributed article about GG Allin's life, which I will quote too, "GG Allin actually got married and had a baby. She later divorced him because she was a coward and couldn't hang…GG doesn't really go on stage naked he just misplaced his clothes… He didn't really mean to throw shit at the audience he just was trying to get it off his hands…GG didn't really rape that ugly girl he just fell on top of her." This is seriously the most bizarre zine I have read. I don't know if I am able to adequately describe the nature of it. The GG Allin article reads like some kid that spare changed on Telegraph in '91 wrote it, so incongruous in the middle of all the other happy busywork fuzzy bear writing. There are articles about community theatre, her kids, GG Allin (!?) some gross ass looking recipes, and something about her trying to organize the zine community of Bakersfield. It's weird because I really feel like this woman has the best intentions and is doing awesome things with her time. I really, really did not want to be mean about her zine. (LG)
B. Lopez / PO BOX 30117 / Bakersfield CA 93385
unlessindicated@hotmail.com

UNHEARD SILENCE / $?
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
Unheard Silence is a prison zine. I've been getting a lot of prison zines lately. Reviewing prison zines is a weird thing. Obviously, they cannot be rated according to the same criteria as other zines. They are made by people in extremely oppressive conditions, with limited means, and most likely, very little peer support. *Unheard Silence*, as prison zines go, is about average. It contains little snippets of stories as well as poems and has a cover that is done in that really weird drawing style that you see so much in prison art: there are always lots of spiderwebs, guns, and skeletons. When you think about it, it's pretty punk rock. (AS)
Devin Baker #63357 / ICC / PO Box 70010 / Boise ID 83707

WAR AGAINST THE IDIOTS #30 / $1
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 48 pgs
WATI reminds me of listening to NPR—a little dry and monotone at first—but then, somehow, you end up totally sucked in to a story, and can't stop listening (or in this case, reading). Some of this was really hilarious, including the "What Happens in Vegas Stays in Vegas" piece and "Drunks That I Have Known." Travels in Canada, acid trips, politics and 7-11—it's all within, so check it out. Not much punk, but some fun and swell writing. (MD)
Liam Idiot / 1731 Cleveland Street / Evanston, IL 60202

WATCHING DAYS BECOME YEARS #2 / $5
6.5 x 9.75 – printed – 48 pgs
Watching Days Become Years has a really nice cover. It sort of fades from an orange to a lighter orange, to a yellow, like



an awesome Hawaiian sunset or a pattern on a pair of Vans. Unfortunately, the comics inside don't measure up. They are of the black-and-white variety, done with some sort of a wide-tipped implement, about a guy (perhaps the author, Jeff LaVine?) who sort of daydreams through an existentially hazy life. The drawings are good enough, but the subject matter left me cold. The narrator is sort of petulant and uncertain, and that's about as deep as it went. I don't really know who he is or what any of his motivations are, and by the end of the comic, I didn't care. (AS)
PO Box 1095/ Portland, OR 97296-0952
Jefflev13@yahoo.com

ZINE LIBS / $2
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 24 pgs
Remember *Mad Libs*? Well this is a whole zine full of them with. With titles such as "The Blackout," "Back in the Days," and "Punk Rock Date," however, these Mad Libs are clearly catered towards themes familiar (and maybe even exclusive) to da punx. The results of these rather lengthy stories are guaranteed to be funny as hell, and there's even a key on the back page to explain the difference between nouns and verbs and such just in case you're retarded! All this and a beautiful silkscreened cover by my homie Caroline Paquita. This is a must have zine for "region" punks, wherever you may be this summer. (BD)
PO Box 40272 / San Francisco, CA 94140
brazentapioca@yahoo.com

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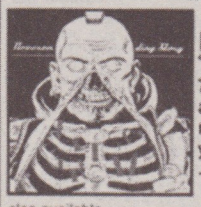

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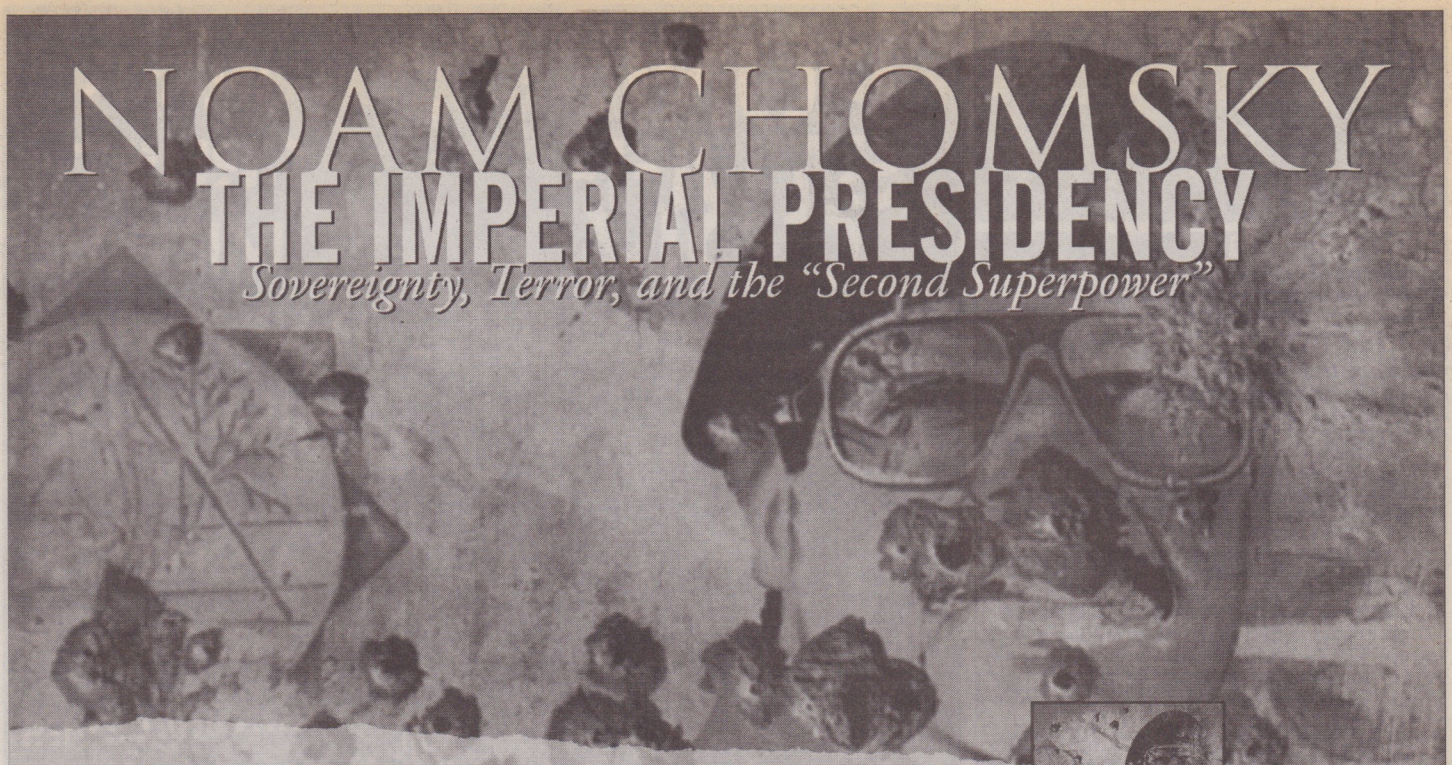

It's Noam Chomsky vs. the Bush Regime
in this much-anticipated spoken-word release. Recorded in November 2004, just after the reelection of George W Bush, Chomsky pinpoints the principle commitments of the current administration. In the name of expanding markets and controlling access to key natural resources we've seen the blatant undermining of democratic practice, contempt for binding International Law, restriction of civil liberties, and the use of war crimes to further foreign policy objectives. This is not another cataloging of the offenses and blunders committed by George W. Bush, but a lively chronicle of the systematic power plays which have effectively wrenched power from citizens' hands and made the world an increasingly unstable place to inhabit.

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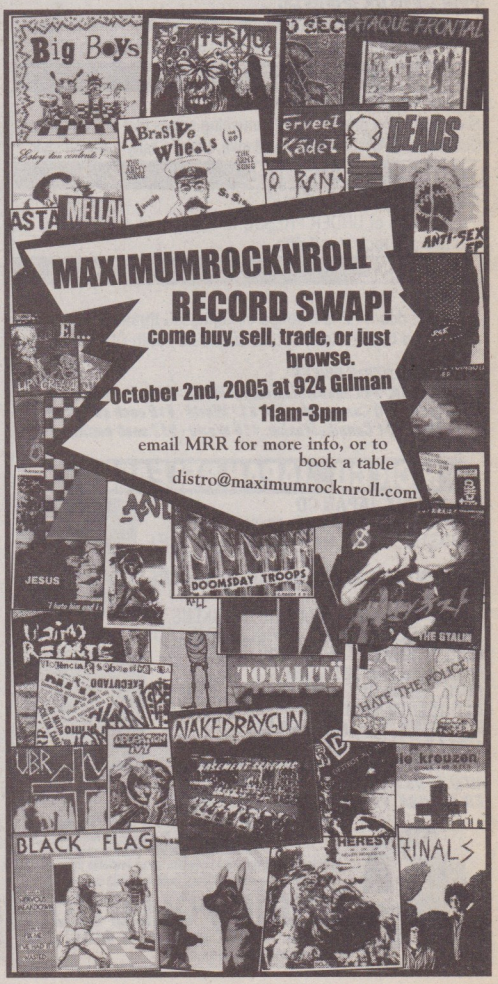

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